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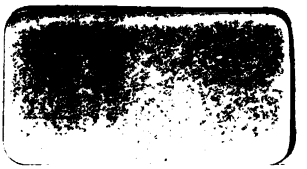

CATHOLICITY

OF

THE NEW CHURCH;

AND

Uncatholicity of New-Churchmen.

BY

B. F. BARRETT,

Author of "Lectures on the New Dispensation," "The Golden Reed," "Beauty for Ashes," "The Visible Church," "Binding and Loosing," "Letters to Henry Ward Beecher on the Divine Trinity," &c.

"The religion of Jesus Christ is not a creed, but a life."—ROBERTSON.

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TO

CHRISTIANS OF EVERY NAME,

WHO ARE WILLING TO FELLOWSHIP

All who Believe in Christ and Steadfastly Obey

HIS PRECEPTS;

WHO COUNT SECTARIANISM THE FOE TO CHRISTIAN PEACE AND SPIRITUAL PROGRESS, AND DESIRE ITS SPEEDY BANISHMENT FROM ALL OUR CHURCHES;

AND

WHO FEEL IT TO BE A RELIGIOUS DUTY TO REGARD AND TREAT AS BRETHREN, ALL WHO HAVE THE MASTER'S SPIRIT, AND HUMBLY STRIVE TO DO HIS WILL;

THESE PAGES ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY

The Author.

PREFACE.

SECTARIANISM has been the bane of the Christian Church, almost from its commencement till the present hour. And although it is less virulent now than formerly, it still hovers around our ecclesiastical assemblies, causing its dark shadow to be seen and its malign influence to be felt in nearly all our churches. It is an evil tree, whose fruit is altogether corrupt. And all who would honor the Master, should be eager to lay the axe to the root of this tree.

I do not mean that Sects should cease to exist; or that Christ's followers should be all organized under one name, or all profess the same creed, unless that creed be extremely brief and simple. This is not to be expected—nor is it even desirable. Variety is observable everywhere in the material universe. It is stamped on all things here below. We see it throughout the whole realm of nature; alike in the stars above and in the earth beneath; in beasts and birds, in forests and fields, in mountains and clouds, in fishes and flowers. Why, then, should there not be a similar variety in the moral universe? Why should not the Church of Christ present an example of variety in unity, as conspicuous, at least, as the trees that adorn a landscape or the flowers that beautify a garden? Why should there not be as much diversity among the followers of the Lord Jesus—diversity in doctrine and ritual, as well as in kind and degree of goodness—as there is among the members and organs of the human body? And why, with such diversity, may they not all be united to their true and living Head,—be bound as closely and lovingly to each other, and work as harmoniously together, as the various bodily members? May we not expect that such *will* be the case, when the life of Christ

shall descend into the churches with increased power and fulness, and His spirit begin to flood the hearts of His people?

The apostle, I think, justifies such expectation, when he says, that "the body is not one member, but many"; and that there ought to be "no schism in the body, but the members should have the same care one of another." A more beautiful illustration than this, of variety in unity, cannot be conceived. For what more various in form and function, than the multitudinous parts of the human body? Yet how admirably are they all combined in one, and with what perfect harmony do they work together, each rejoicing or suffering with all the rest! This illustrates Paul's idea of the church of Christ; for he adds: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." It is also Swedenborg's oft-repeated illustration of the Lord's kingdom in heaven as well as on earth. His whole doctrine concerning the "Grand Man," is but an amplification of the same idea.

But to this enlarged and catholic view of the church, Sectarianism is forever opposed. It is unable to see how unity can co-exist with variety. It regards diversity as incompatible with harmony. In its own nature contracted and anti-Christian, it cannot admit that there is any truth outside of its own formulas, or any goodness different from its own variety, or any church wider than its own communion. It makes its own creed the measure of all others, and approves or condemns according as they square or fail to square with this assumed standard. It never invites to independent and manly thought, or free and earnest inquiry; for it knows that variety—some degree of doctrinal difference—must inevitably result from this. On the contrary, it seeks by various arts and endless machinery—by pains and penalties, church censures and withdrawal of fellowship—to discourage and repress free thought, and compel a dead uniformity. Sectarianism, therefore, is as unfriendly to religious progress as it is to Christian union. Its spirit is the spirit of anti-Christ—not large, loving, generous, and all-embracing, but narrow, selfish, conceited and unprogressive.

What, then, is the remedy for this great evil? I know of none better than the steady and persistent inculcation of genuine Catholicity. Implant in the hearts of the people a deep hatred of the spirit of sect, and an ardent love of the opposite spirit. Teach

them to prefer charity above faith, and to judge men by their lives rather than by their creeds. Teach them to think as well and speak as kindly of those who differ from, as of those who agree with, themselves in doctrine; and to regard and treat as brethren all who display a Christian temper and live a Christian life. Teach them that all who have the Master's spirit, are surely owned and accepted of Him; that perfect agreement in forms of faith, is neither to be expected nor desired; that variety is the divine order in the moral as well as in the physical universe; that the Word of God is a living Fountain where all souls may drink and be refreshed,—a Fountain from which some may draw higher and purer, others lower and cruder forms of truth, according to the purity of their motives, the strength of their trust, the measure of their obedience, and the completeness of their self-abnegation. Teach them that in the Heavenly Father's house there are *many mansions*, corresponding to the many kinds and degrees of good in men, and to the many forms or phases of truth; and that all who truly seek to know, and humbly strive to do His will *as they understand it*, may be sure of an entrance into some *one* of the many mansions prepared for the blessed.

Let inculcations like these be frequent from our pulpits and in our lecture-rooms, and although different denominations may continue to exist, the hurtful spirit of sect will ere long depart, as owls and bats flee before the rising sun. In the place of a mean and narrow Sectarianism, there will come a broad and Christian Catholicity, gladdening the hearts of all Christ's people. And instead of antagonistic sects, warring against and weakening each other, we shall soon have, out of many and various churches, one harmonious and united church;—a church all the more beautiful and perfect, too, because of its great diversity, just as the perfection of a band of music is increased by a variety of instruments, or the beauty of a king's crown, by a variety of jewels.

That this little volume may contribute something toward an end so desirable, is the earnest wish of its author. He believes that he has indicated the true ground of Christian fellowship; and that the Catholicity advocated in these pages will, on examination, be found to be identical with that of the Gospel itself. If what he has said shall be the means of awakening attention to the general

subject, and of enlisting abler pens in its service, his chief object will have been accomplished.

Possibly some may think that the author has exposed, with too much freedom, the shortcomings of his own particular branch of the Church on the score of Catholicity. But he has simply acted upon the old adage that "charity begins at home." And if others, instead of exposing and rebuking the sectarianism of their neighbors, will be as frank as he has been in confessing its existence at home, and in administering the rebuke it merits, we may confidently hope that good will be accomplished, and a more catholic spirit ere long be infused into all our churches At the same time he cannot deny, that, in view of the teachings of Swedenborg as exhibited in these pages, sectarianism in the nominal New Church is more unbecoming and a graver offense, than it is among any other class of Christians; for it is an offense committed against clearer and more abundant light. Therefore it should receive the sterner rebuke.

B. F. B.

ORANGE, N. J., April 27, 1863.

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EXPLANATION OF REFERENCES.

The works of Emanuel Swedenborg, to which the author has had occasion to refer in the following pages, are:

A. C.,	which stand for		Arcana Coelestia.
T. C. R.,	"	"	True Christian Religion.
A. R.,	"	"	Apocalypse Revealed.
A. E.,	"	"	Apocalypse Explained.
D. P.,	"	"	Divine Providence.
H. H.,	"	"	Heaven and Hell.
D. L. W.,	"	"	Divine Love and Wisdom.
D. S. S.,	"	"	Doctrine concerning the Sacred Scripture.
N. J. D.,	"	"	The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine.
L. J.,	"	"	The Last Judgment.
Contin. L. J.,	"	"	Continuation of the Last Judgment.

PART I.

CATHOLICITY OF THE NEW CHURCH.

CATHOLICITY OF THE NEW CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

ATTITUDE OF THE NOMINAL NEW CHURCH.

In offering a few thoughts and some evidence on the subject of New Church catholicity, which will be found to be none other than true Christian catholicity, I am conscious of a double purpose: first, to correct, as far as possible, a very prevalent, but not very favorable impression in regard to the New Church; and, second, to exhibit that phase or characteristic of this Church, which has been too much overlooked hitherto, even by those who profess its doctrines, but which is calculated to win for it the favorable regard of all generous and liberal minds.

But here, in the outset, I shall be asked to define what I mean by the New Church. In answer, I would say: I mean by it that church which John saw in vision under the image of the Holy City New

Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God. I mean that church, which, under the same image, is described in divine language as lying "four square," its length, breadth, and height, being all equal; and its measure being "the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." I mean the church that has Jesus Christ himself for its chief Corner-Stone, and whose doctrines are all contained in the Word of the Lord. The relation which Swedenborg sustains to this Church is simply that of an illumined expounder of its doctrines, and revealer of its heavenly spirit. Without conceding to him, therefore, anything like infallibility—a claim which some have set up *for* him, but which was never set up *by* him—and without raising the question whether he is to be regarded as a "finality," I nevertheless accept his teachings as the teachings of the New Church, and shall speak of them as such throughout this volume. The breadth and catholicity of his teachings, therefore, will reveal the breadth and catholicity of the New Church; and will, at the same time, exhibit something of the spirit that must animate all those who really belong to the New Jerusalem.

It is but to state a well-known truth, to say, that the popular impression in regard to the New Church in our country, is, that it is one of the narrowest, most conceited, most exclusive and bigoted of all the Sects. I do not say that this is strictly correct. But such being the prevailing impression, it becomes

those of us, who profess to be of this Church, to search diligently for the cause; for we may be sure that such an impression could never have gained currency unless there were *some* foundation for it. It could not have been derived from the writings of Swedenborg, since it prevails among those who are not familiar with his writings. Besides, it is well known that Swedenborg himself possessed none of the elements that enter into the character of a bigot. Nor do his writings exhibit anything of the narrow and exclusive spirit of sect, but a spirit quite the opposite—as I shall have frequent occasion to show hereafter. Whence, then, has been derived this general impression? It is easy to pronounce it altogether incorrect, and to ascribe its origin to ignorance, prejudice, or some perverse disposition on the part of those who have imbibed it. This account of the matter may be most agreeable to the pride and conceit of the natural heart. And for this reason it is the one, with which many will be most likely to rest satisfied. Besides, it saves us the trouble of self-exploration, and exempts us from one of the severest and most humiliating of all duties—that of confessing our own faults.

Now, however humiliating may be the confession, I submit that the cause of that impression in regard to the New Church, to which I have referred, is to be found mainly among ourselves. It has originated in the mistaken views which were early adopted and

confirmed in regard to the nature and whereabout of the New Jerusalem, and the peculiar attitude toward other Christians which these views have led the nominal New Church to adopt. For, see what our attitude has been, and is still—I mean the attitude of the great body of nominal New-Churchmen. We have assumed that we are God's peculiar people; that we are the only people on the face of the earth who have a just appreciation of the Christian religion, or are justly entitled to the Christian name; that we alone are in the light of God's countenance, and that all others are in spiritual darkness; that the Lord has "left" all other Christian organizations, and has come to dwell exclusively with us Swedenborgians; that we alone have authority from Him to administer the Christian ordinances; and that these ordinances are without efficacy and without validity when administered by other Christians. And our actions have been in accordance with these assumptions. We have refused to recognize as *Christian* baptism, the baptism administered by others than professed New Church ministers; and have required persons, on being admitted to fellowship with us, to receive this ordinance at Swedenborgian hands, however they may have previously been baptized by others. Reports, maintaining this ground, have been accepted and adopted by the largest organized body of the New Church in this country; and some of our ministers—ministers of the highest grade, too—have

publicly proclaimed their belief that the worship of all other Christians, *except* Swedenborgians, at the present day, is abomination in the sight of the Lord, that other Christians can have no communication with the Lord or heaven; and that their baptism, therefore, so far from being Christian baptism, or a sign of introduction into the Christian Church, is a means of initiating the subjects of it into societies who have their abode in the realms of darkness. And this shocking and insane notion, put forth by some of our *ordaining ministers*, so far from receiving the condemnation which it merits, has been virtually endorsed by the organized New Church in America.*

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*Lest what is here stated should be deemed too shocking for belief, the reader is referred to a pamphlet published in 1855, entitled, "The Validity of the Baptism of the Consummated Church viewed in its Relation to the New Church. By Thomas Wilks." By "the Consummated Church," the author of this pamphlet means all other church organizations in Christendom, *except* the nominal New Church, or that popularly known as the Swedenborgian body. And on page 15, he says: "Now, since, according to the laws of the spiritual world, there can exist no communication between this church and heaven, and since *all* its worship is totally rejected as spiritual abomination in the sight of the Lord, it is evident that its perverted baptism, which, being included in the *all* of its worship, is necessarily rejected, does not insert its baptized among Christian spirits in that heaven from which it is, as to its internal state, so far separated and removed as to render communication with it impossible; for it is certain, that insertion by baptism cannot be effected in heaven without communication with heaven." But what *is* effected by "old church baptism"—which is the designation applied by this writer to all baptism administered by other

Consistently enough with all this, we have broken off all religious intercourse with other Christians, and have looked upon them, and often spoken of them, as *not Christians* but *Gentiles*—as being without the pale of the Christian church. We have encouraged the receivers of Swedenborg's teachings to separate themselves at once from the churches in which they have previously worshipped, to absent themselves from their meetings on the Sabbath, and no longer to contribute to the support of such churches, nor aid them in the performance of any of the uses in which they are engaged. And, in not a few instances, this theory of exclusion or non-intercourse has been car-

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than Swedenborgian hands? Into what societies, or among what class of spirits in the other world, *does* it insert, if not among Christian spirits? We are told on page 18 of this pamphlet: "The societies and congregations, in the spiritual world, into which its baptism inserts, are composed of such spirits only *as are necessarily excluded from heaven.*" Again, in the same paragraph, we are told that its baptism "*can insert into no other societies than those of the dragon and the false prophet.*" In other words—and without the shadow of perversion—baptism, when administered by other than Swedenborgian hands, inserts the subjects thereof among the devils in hell! And the pamphlet which teaches this, has, for several years, been advertised in the *New Jerusalem Messenger*, the organ of the American New Church General Convention, in the list of New Church works—so recognized by that body. And it is well known that the General Convention is careful to exclude from its list of advertised works all such as are supposed by that body to contain the least taint of error. These facts, taken in connection with the circumstance that the author of this pamphlet was, by a formal vote of the Convention, elevated to the third or

ried into the social relations, and allowed to interfere with social intercourse. Our young men and young women have sometimes been discouraged from entering into matrimonial engagements with Christians outside of our own communion, as if such engagements contemplated marriage with those of *a different religion.* Indeed, the ground has been openly taken—we have heard it from the lips of New Church ministers—that all who are not professedly of the New Church *are* of a different religion. That is, they are *not* regarded as Christians.

Such is the attitude which the nominal New Church in our country has assumed, and which it still maintains, toward all other Christians. True,

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highest grade of the New Church ministry, subsequent to the time of its publication, would seem to justify the belief that its teachings are generally approved by that body.

The same bigoted, anti-Christian, and really shocking notion has been put forth, without a word of dissent from any of the recognized organs of the New Church, by another of its ordaining ministers, Rev. Richard De Charms, in a pamphlet "On the Importance and Necessity of an External Church," &c. On page 71 of this pamphlet, the writer, speaking of "the baptism of the old church priest," says: "It inoculates the person, who is the subject of it, with all the corruption of the consummated church, so that the spirit of him who receives it absorbs that corruption, and is wholly sickened by it, comparatively as the physical frame of the anatomist absorbs and is sometimes sickened unto death by the virus of the dead body that he is dissecting." And what renders such teaching all the more shameful, is, the pretext, on the part of its authors and upholders, that it is justified by the teachings of Swedenborg.

there have been, and are still, many individuals who have protested against this as wrong and altogether unjustifiable. But this has been the attitude of the great majority. And such being the fact, is it strange that we should have acquired the reputation of being an exceedingly narrow, illiberal, and bigoted sect? Can a more presumptuous attitude, or one more offensive to Christians round about us, be conceived of, than this of the nominal New Church? We do not call in question the perfect sincerity of those who have assumed this attitude. They have, I presume, supposed they were doing right. They have, no doubt, acted conscientiously. They have believed—strange as it may seem to minds of a liberal cast—that this peculiar attitude is not only justified but required by the teachings of Swedenborg. This would seem most unreasonable in the outset, admitting Swedenborg to have been a great and highly illumined man. And when his teachings are critically examined and well understood, we shall find that they afford *not the slightest* justification of the narrow, exclusive, and intensely offensive ground which so many of his readers and admirers have assumed. We shall see that the New Church—taking the Swedish Seer as its herald and exponent—is remarkable for nothing more than for its breadth and catholicity.

CHAPTER II.

INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS ATTITUDE.

And what have been the consequences of this peculiarly offensive attitude which the nominal New Church has assumed toward all other Christians? It has produced, both upon ourselves and those around us, precisely the results which might have been reasonably anticipated. It is not to be supposed that we can deliberately unchurch all who differ from us in their doctrinal beliefs, or that we can deny to them the title to the Christian name, without impressing them with the conviction that we are sadly wanting in Christian catholicity, if not in something even more vital. And the effect upon ourselves of such an assumption, cannot be otherwise than most unhappy. For there are to be found, in all denominations of Christians, some genuine disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Among them all there are some who devoutly worship Him, and scrupulously obey His commandments. There are some who read and reverence the Word, and who, through faithful obedience to its simple precepts, become closely conjoined to the Lord, and receive His spirit in great fullness. In order to be a humble

follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore a true Christian, it is not necessary that one understand the Science of Correspondences. Neither is it necessary that he understand this Science before he can receive any heavenly instruction from the Word. The most important parts of the Word—those most essential to life and salvation, are sufficiently intelligible to all minds. Their meaning lies on the surface, as it were, or so very near the surface, that it can be easily reached without any knowledge of the doctrine of Correspondences. Accordingly Swedenborg says:

"The Word, in its literal sense, is like a man clothed, whose face and hands are naked. All things necessary to the life of man, and consequently to his salvation, are naked; but the rest are clothed; and in many places where they are clothed they shine through the clothing, as the face shines through a veil of thin silk."—*D. S. S.*, 55.

Again he says:

"In regard to doctrinals derived from the literal sense of the Word, the case is this: that, when man is principled in them, and at the same time in a life according to them, *he hath in himself correspondence;* for the angels, who are attendant on him, are in interior truths, while he is in exterior; and thus he hath communication by doctrinals with heaven, but yet according to the good of his life."—*A. C.*, 1798.

Now, suppose all this to be denied. Suppose the readers of Swedenborg—the nominal New Church—to deny that there are or can be any genuine follow-

ers of Christ outside of their own communion. Suppose them to deny that any portion of the Word can be understood without a knowledge of Correspondences; and that those who understand it merely in its literal sense, can have no communication with heaven. Suppose they persuade themselves that they alone constitute the Lord's Church, and that all who do not perfectly agree with them in doctrine, are without the pale of the true Church—what must be the consequences? The persuasion is a false one, and it must necessarily, therefore, result in harm to those who cherish it. And it will harm them. It will retard the growth of genuine humility in their hearts. It will foster pride, conceit, and self-righteouness—the most subtle and dangerous of all spiritual maladies. It will, in a measure, separate them from a large multitude of Christ's people, and prevent that free influx of heavenly graces, which a recognition of wider fellowship would allow and promote. It will exert a hardening, contracting, and belittling influence upon their minds. It will bring coldness, drought, and sterility into their hearts. It will lead them to overlook, or to neglect and despise, the Christian literature of the times; and they will, therefore, fail to receive the enlarging and stimulating influence of such literature. The good and truth which God gives to men, even to Christians, is, like everything else, infinitely various, not only in degree, but in quality and form. Therefore, it is adapted to

an infinite variety of mental states. And whoever refuses to see or to acknowledge this, does so far turn away from the Master, and induce upon his own mind and heart a cramping and withering influence.

It is not, then, a matter of indifference, whether, in our own minds even, we unchurch any of Christ's true followers; or whether we refuse to acknowledge the good and truth in others, though it differ from our own both in kind and in degree. It is an important practical question. We cannot unchurch any whom the angels fellowship, without an offense to the angels as well as to good men on earth. And whatever we do that grieves the angels, must sooner or later bring sadness into our own hearts. As pertinent to the subject before us, and as illustrating the truth of what I have just been saying, take the following instructive paragraph from the *Arcana Cœlestia:*

"There are also societies of interior friendship. They were such in the life of the body, that they loved from the heart those who were within their common consociation, and also mutually embraced them as united in brotherhood. They believed that they themselves were alive and in the light, and that they who were out of their society were respectively not alive and not in the light. And this being their quality and character, they also thought that the Lord's heaven consisted solely of those few. But it was given to tell them that the Lord's heaven is immense, and that it consists of every people and tongue, and that all are therein who have been prin-

cipled in the good of love and of faith; and it was shown that there are in heaven those who have relation to all the provinces of the body, as to its exteriors and interiors; but that if they aspired further than to those things which correspond to their life, they could not have heaven; especially if they condemned others who were out of their society; and that, in such a case, their society is a society of interior friendship, the quality whereof is such, that they deprive others of the blessed principle of spiritual affection when they approach them: for they regard them not as the elect, and as not alive; which thought, when communicated, induces what is sad; and yet this sadness, according to the laws of order in the other life, returns to them."—*A. C*, 4805.

This paragraph is full of instruction upon the subject now before us, and reveals, in a striking manner, the beautiful catholicity of the New Church, taking Swedenborg as its herald and exponent. It shows us that the question we have undertaken to discuss, is not merely speculative, but intensely practical. And a glance at the existing state of things in the nominal New Church is sufficient to convince us that this instruction has been sadly overlooked by most Swedenborgians; and that there is great need of its being more deeply impressed upon the minds and hearts of all our people. Indeed, it seems as if Swedenborg saw our New Church societies just as they now are, when he was describing those "societies of interior friendship;" and that he wrote this paragraph especially for our instruction. These "societies" do not

appear to have been particularly wicked. On the contrary, those belonging to them seem to have been particularly kind and affectionate *toward each other*—toward all who were precisely of their way of thinking, and whom they regarded, therefore, as brethren. They were persons, who, while on earth, "loved *from the heart* those who were within their common consociation, and also mutually embraced them as united in brotherhood." They had a mutual admiration for each other, based, it would seem, not so much upon any very clear perception which they had of each other's real quality, as upon the circumstance of their belonging to the same "consociation" —agreeing perfectly in their doctrinal beliefs—being of the same denomination or sect. Their great and most conspicuous fault seems to have been, an overweening self-conceit; an idea, no doubt very honestly imbibed and conscientiously entertained, that about all the light and life of heaven were monopolized by themselves. For "they believed," it is said, "that they themselves were *alive and in the light*, and that they who were out of their society [i. e., of a different denomination] were respectively *not alive and not in the light*." And "they also thought that the Lord's heaven consisted *solely of those few*." This was their great and hurtful error, which Swedenborg proceeds at once to correct. And he does so, by instructing them that the Lord's heaven is much more comprehensive than they imagined;—that it is "im-

mense," including *all*, of whatever color, clime, or creed, "who have been principled in the good of love and of faith;" and that the diversity of character to be found there—the various forms of good and truth in heaven—might fitly be compared to the diversity in form and function which we find among the members and organs of the human body. And then he states the effect, both upon themselves and others, of the narrow and conceited notions with which they were imbued. He tells them that, in "condemning others who were out of their society," or who were not of their particular denomination, they closed their own minds to the influx of heaven; or, what is equivalent, that "they could not have heaven," if they did so. He further tells them that, their self-righteousness, coupled with the thought and belief that all who are not of their society or denomination, are "not the elect, and not alive," induces a feeling of sadness in others;—that it gives to them such a hard, repulsive, and chilling sphere, "that they deprive others of that blessed principle of spiritual affection *when they approach them*;" yet, that the sadness which their conceited and exclusive sphere induces in others, "according to the laws of order in the other life, returns to them."

The purport of this whole paragraph is clear and unmistakable. It contains no savor of sectarian exclusiveness, but breathes the genuine catholicity of the gospel of Christ. It reveals the breadth and com-

prehensiveness of the true church on earth. It condemns the narrow spirit of sect as something foreign to the kingdom of heaven, and inculcates a spirit altogether the opposite—a spirit at once generous, tolerant, large, and inclusive. How much it is to be desired that Christians everywhere should act according to the spirit and teaching of this paragraph! How many high walls of separation would then be thrown down! How many narrow and hurtful prejudices would be uprooted! How many heart-burnings would be quenched, and bitter animosities among Christians be healed! How would the Spirit of Christ descend, and the parched ground in ten thousand hearts become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water!

To introduce this genuine Christian catholicity among men, is a part of the mission of the Lord's New Church. Let those who claim to be of this Church, take heed that they fail not to uphold, defend, and illustrate this catholicity.

CHAPTER III.

CATHOLICITY—INVOLVED IN THE NEW CHURCH DOCTRINE OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

No writer on theology was ever more affirmative than Swedenborg. No one was ever more positive than he He never says, "I *think* this is true," or, "it *seems* to me thus and so;" but he always speaks with the authority of one who *knows* whereof he affirms. He saw the truth with all the clearness of a prophet; therefore he speaks with a prophet's confidence. The system of religious doctrines unfolded and taught by him as the doctrines of the New Church, is the most positive and clearly-defined system that was ever revealed, elaborated, or conceived of. Yet, notwithstanding the prophet-like confidence with which he declares what he saw—notwithstanding he states every truth with all the calmness and assurance that we should expect from one who *knew* it to be truth, yet he is, of all others, the most mild and tolerant toward all forms of innocent error. To be able to grasp with firmness the highest truths, and to state them with clearness and confidence, and at the same time to show how lower and apparently conflicting forms of the same truths may be innocently

and even profitably held, is the mark of a truly great mind. Divine truth has an infinite number of phases, adapted to the endless diversity of states of which the human mind is capable; and in every one of these phases it is truth, and is profitable to that particular mental state, to which, in that particular form or phase, it is adapted. Minds of little breadth or power do not readily comprehend this. To their feeble apprehension, truth has but one phase—but one form—and that the particular phase or form under which it presents itself to their circumscribed vision. Whoever holds it in any different form, holds not the truth, they think, but its opposite. They persuade themselves that the Word of God has only one meaning, and that this lies no deeper than their own little skimmer can reach. And they are ready to quarrel with all who think they see any other meaning; or, at least, to pronounce such sight illusory, and their views unscriptural and false. But the most capacious and enlightened minds know that God's truth is, like Himself, infinite in depth of meaning, and in variety of aspect. They know that His Word is a well of living water, whose profound depths no finite intelligence has ever fathomed—whose wealth of meaning the thirsty Ages can never exhaust. It contains truth adapted to angels and men —yea, to the highest and most perfect angels, and to the lowest and most imperfect men It is a Fountain at which the lofty and the lowly, the wise and

the simple, the learned and the ignorant, may alike drink and be refreshed. It contains truth for the Nations and the Ages. And herein consists the perfection of the written Word, and its infinite superiority to all human compositions. Because it contains an infinity of meaning, therefore it is adapted to an infinite diversity of mental states—to the states, indeed, of all finite intelligences on earth and in heaven. And although that particular aspect or phase of truth presented to the wise, may differ widely from that which the simple are able to discern, yet if both are careful to reverence and obey the truth as they understand it, they do all that is required of them. Both are enlightened by the truth, though in different degrees. Both are followers of Him who is declared to be "the Light of the world," though it may be at such unequal distances from the central Luminary, that the light shall be sevenfold greater to the one than to the other. And since all the humble followers of the Lord, be their states as to good and truth ever so diverse, are owned of Him, and are in truth His children, therefore they should acknowledge and treat each other as brethren. They are all disciples of the common Master, though some may be farther advanced than others. They are all children of the common Father, though some may be older and riper in wisdom than others. They are all members of one and the same church, though some may be nearer and others more remote from the centre;—though

some may belong to the province of the eyes or ears, and others to that of the hands or feet. But as hands and feet are alike essential to the completeness of the man, so are the people which these members represent, to the completeness of the church.

Such is the beautiful and catholic teaching of the New Church, taking Swedenborg as its herald and exponent. According to this teaching, it is not necessary to Christian union or brotherhood, that all should understand the Scriptures precisely alike. It is not necessary that all should apprehend the higher and more interior meaning of the Scriptures. It is only necessary that they should regard and reverence the Scriptures as the Word of God, and humbly strive to obey their teachings. If they do this, they are in a state of Christian charity. And, although they understand the Word only in its lowest or most external sense, their hearts are at one with the angels in heaven, because they are united to Christ; and internally, therefore, they are at one with those on earth who understand and obey the Scriptures according to their more interior meaning.

The great purpose of Swedenborg's mission was the unfolding of the spiritual sense of the Word. And because he often speaks of the infinite importance of this sense—of its being, to that of the letter, what the soul is to the body—of its being the genuine Word itself, while the sense of the letter is *not* the Word—therefore we are apt to conclude that only

those can have any knowledge of the Lord or of spiritual things, who read and receive the teachings of Swedenborg. We are apt to think that those who have no knowledge of the Science of Correspondences, or of the spiritual sense of the Word as unfolded by this Science, can have no proper understanding of the Christian religion, and no genuine Christian experience. We are inclined to look upon all such as destitute of a true knowledge of the Lord and heaven, and as scarcely within the pale of the Christian church. This is an error into which not a few of the readers of Swedenborg have actually fallen—an error which has come from a partial and superficial view of his teachings. A more careful and comprehensive view of what he has revealed concerning the Word, will show us that this conclusion is not well founded. However much he would have us value the spiritual sense of the Word, and however he exalts it above the sense of the letter, he nevertheless would have us regard as Christians, and treat as brethren in Christ, all who revere the Word and humbly seek to follow its guidance, though they may understand it only in its literal sense. "There is no harm," he says, "in believing the sense of the letter, although the internal sense teacheth otherwise, if it be done in simplicity of heart" (*A. C.*, 2395);—that is, there is no harm in believing, in child-like simplicity, what is taught in the literal sense of the Word, even though such belief or teaching differ

materially from the spiritual sense. Again, speaking of those who believe in simplicity, "that God is angry, that He condemns and casts into hell those who live wickedly," he says:

"If they live well and thus believe because it is so said in the Word, *the Lord accepts their belief as truth*, because the truth is concealed within such belief; and this also appears before the interior angels, although they themselves do not see it."—*Ap. Ex.*, 375.

Again, Swedenborg says:

"Whoever believes in simplicity does not incur guilt, although what he believes *be not true in itself*, but apparent truth. As for example: if he believes that the Lord is angry, that He punishes, that He leads into temptation, and the like; or if he believes that the bread and wine in the Holy Supper are somewhat significative; or that the flesh and blood are somehow present therein in the way that they explain it; it is of no consequence whether they say the one or the other, although there are few who think of the latter; and if they do, provided it be in simplicity of heart, because they have been so instructed, and they still live in charity, it does them no injury."—*A. C.*, 1798.

Again, speaking of the exterior and interior goods and truths of the Word, this illumined writer says that the belief in the literal sense of the Word, even when that sense is widely different from the spiritual, is accepted by the Lord as if it were *the real truth*, provided the believer be in a state of charity.

"He who believes that, if he loves his father and mother according to the precepts of the Decalogue and because it is so commanded, he shall enjoy a long life, is accepted on the same ground *as if he had believed the real truth*, because he does not know that by father and mother, in the supreme sense, are understood the Lord and His kingdom; by father is meant the Lord, and by mother His kingdom; and that by prolongation of days, or length of life, is signified eternal felicity. The case is similar *in a thousand other instances.*"—*Ap. Ex.*, 375.

Repeatedly does Swedenborg tell us there is no harm in believing as the letter of the Word teaches, provided it be done in simplicity and with devout reverence for the Word, although what is believed be not in itself true. And not only so, but he teaches that such simple and devout belief is *profitable* to the believer, and a means of conjoining him with the Lord and heaven, provided he be in the effort to live well according to the truth as he understands it. Such is the connection between heaven and earth, and such the nature of correspondence between spiritual and natural truth, that such persons are drawn into close intimacy with the angels, and their minds are affected by the interior things of the Word, while they understand it only in the literal sense, and are all unconscious of the presence of the angels save as their presence is indicated by a serene and sweet internal peace. Thus, after telling us that, "when man thinks, while under holy influence, concerning bread, as concerning the bread in the Holy Supper,"

"the angels have thought concerning good, such being the correspondence;" and "when, under holy influence, he thinks about raiment, the thought of the angels is about truth," he adds:

"And so it is *in all other instances which occur in the Word.* Hence it may appear what is the nature and quality of the conjunction of heaven and earth effected by the Word, viz., that a man who reads it under holy influence, by such correspondence is conjoined closely with heaven, and by heaven with the Lord, although the man thinks only of those things in the Word which appertain to its literal sense. The essentially holy principle which influences the man on such occasion, is derived from an influx of celestial and spiritual thoughts and affections, such as exist with the angels."—*A. C.*, 3735.

Again:

"All and singular the things of the Word are holy; but the holiness which is therein doth not appear to *the understanding*, except to him who is acquainted with the internal sense thereof; nevertheless it appears to *the apperception*, by influx from heaven, to him who believes the Word to be holy. Such influx is wrought through the internal sense, in which the angels are principled, which sense, *notwithstanding it is not understood by man*, still affects him, because the affection of the angels, who are in that sense, is communicated."—*A. C.*, 5247. (See also *A. C.*, 6789, 3464, 3690; *Ap. Ex.*, 778, where the same thing is taught.)

Through the lower senses of the Word the Lord is able to reach and operate upon minds in a low or

very external condition. That is the reason why the Word in the literal sense is what we find it. It is thereby adapted to the wants of natural men and children, and becomes, even to them, a divine medium of heavenly influences—a medium whereby they can be elevated into serener and loftier states. Swedenborg tells us that the twelve chosen disciples, being merely natural men, "were unable to form any other notion of the Lord, than what the Jews at this day entertain concerning the Messiah whom they expect, viz.: that He would exalt them to dominion and glory above all the nations in the world." And the Lord, in addressing this state of mind, spoke of their "sitting upon twelve thrones, and judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" which language they understood literally. "The reason," we are told, "why the Lord so spake, was, that they might receive external truths, and thereby be introduced to internal truths; for in those external truths which the Lord spake, internal truths were stored up and concealed, and in process of time these latter are made manifest; and when this is the case, those external truths are dissipated, and serve only as objects or means of thinking about internal truths."—*A. C.*, 3857.

Now, in the quotations we have here made—and they might be multiplied indefinitely—we are taught a beautiful lesson of Christian catholicity. Although the Word contains a spiritual sense, which is

of infinite value, yet Swedenborg teaches that a knowledge of this sense is not indispensable to Christian discipleship. We have seen that men may be in the good of life, yea, in spiritual good—that they may be in conjunction with the Lord and in close communion with the angels of heaven, and thus have an interior and experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ and the things pertaining to His kingdom, without even knowing that there *is* a spiritual sense to the Word. Such, plainly, is the authorized teaching of the New Church on this subject. And the lesson to be derived from it, is this: That we of the nominal New Church have no right to regard ourselves as nearer to the Lord, or as more truly His disciples, than other Christians, simply because we understand the spiritual sense of the Word: That we have felt on this account, any peculiar claim to be considered, or any right to consider ourselves, as the Lord's true church, to the exclusion of all others: And that we should regard and treat as brethren in Christ, all, of whatever name, who devoutly reverence the Word, and humbly strive to obey its precepts, even though they have no knowledge of the spiritual sense as elicited by the Science of Correspondences.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRUE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN UNION.

We have seen that, although there is a spiritual sense to the Word, which is, to the sense of the letter, what the soul is to the body, yet a knowledge of this sense is not to be insisted on as a test of Christian discipleship. We have seen that, according to Swedenborg—whatever some of his disciples may believe or teach to the contrary—persons, who believe in simplicity what is taught in the letter of the Word, and who have no knowledge of its spiritual sense, may nevertheless be sincere and genuine Christians—humble followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and intimately consociated with the angels of heaven. Of course all such must belong to the Lord's kingdom and church. And if we profess to be of His kingdom and church, we should regard and treat them as brethren, however they may differ from us in their understanding of the Word.

But we know there is often a wide difference between the teaching of the spiritual and that of the literal sense of the Word. And if those who accept the teaching of the spirit, and those who abide in the sense of the letter, may yet fellowship each other—if

the spirit of Christ may dwell so abundantly in the hearts of both these classes of disciples, that they shall feel themselves to be brethren, then perfect agreement in doctrine or religious belief cannot be indispensable to Christian union. There must be some more powerful principle whereby Christ's people may be cemented into one—some principle strong enough to overcome the antagonism of conflicting creeds or mere intellectual differences, and bind kindred hearts together. Is there any such principle? If so, what is it?

Look at the union among intimate friends—those who feel most strongly bound to each other. Perfect intellectual agreement is not the strong cord that binds them together. Frequently those are strongly attached to each other, whose opinions on many subjects differ widely. It is not the people whose *heads* but whose *hearts* are most like our own, for whom we feel the strongest and most enduring friendship. Suppose a man to be deeply smitten with the love of moral excellence—suppose him to have acquired a just appreciation and a profound admiration of these Christian graces — meekness, humility, forbearance, uprightness, self-denial, resignation, trust, patience, and heroic self-sacrifice in the cause of his country and of humanity—he will feel himself most strongly drawn toward those in whom he sees these virtues most strikingly exemplified. He will feel for them the strongest attachment. He may differ from them

in opinion or doctrine; but if he is really a good man, he cannot help loving them for all that. Nay, he will love them more ardently than he does those who agree with him perfectly in opinion, but in whom these virtues are less conspicuous. This will certainly be the case, unless he has been educated into the notion that mere *belief* is of paramount importance. A man who has received the doctrines of the New Church into his heart and life, will feel himself actually nearer to those who know nothing of these doctrines, and who even profess the doctrines of the Old Church, provided they exhibit the spirit of the Master in their daily lives, than he will to those who profess their belief in the very same doctrines, but whose lives seem selfish, sordid, thoughtless, and unholy. If we really have the spirit of Christ in our hearts, we shall love that spirit wherever we see it in others; and this, too, without regard to doctrinal profession. Nor is this a matter of mere volition. It is a law of our being, absolutely imperative where its controlling force is not counteracted by a misdirected education.

Here is a peaceful and happy family. Its unity is complete and perfect. What produces and maintains that unity? Not similarity of *thought*, but similarity of *feeling*. In thought they differ widely. The thoughts of the parents are beyond the intellectual range of all the children. They are deeper and more comprehensive. They see and believe truths which the children cannot begin to comprehend. And so,

too, the circle of thought which the elder children have reached, is quite beyond that of the younger. And those near the same age may differ materially in intellectual capacity, and in the opinions they form on various subjects. But there is a similar *feeling* in the hearts of all. Each member of the family loves all the rest; and although the love may be deeper and stronger in some than in others, the quality of the feeling is the same in all—just as fire or heat is the same in the taper and in the sun and in all intermediate flames, however it may differ in intensity. And it is this love-element which produces such perfect unity in the family. It is this, and not their intellectual agreement, which binds them so completely into one. It is a union of *hearts* and not of *heads*—a union all the more perfect, oftentimes, because of certain intellectual differences.

Now, a well-ordered family is a fit representative of Christ's church on earth. All genuine Christians are members of His family and household. They are all children of the Heavenly Father. Some may be older and more advanced in wisdom than others. Some may have attained to a degree of knowledge which the others are, as yet, unable to comprehend. But love to the common Father and to each other is the principle that pervades and animates all their hearts. They all have the Father's image stamped upon them, for they all have something of His divine spirit within. They may understand the Word dif-

ferently, some resting in the more exterior and others receiving its more interior senses; and their views of doctrine may differ in a corresponding degree. But their hearts are alike, and therefore they are united as one family. They are one in spirit—one in desire and intention—one in disposition and feeling—one in their ends and aims of life—one in their purpose to serve the Master, each according to his several ability. Thus they are one body in Christ—not on account of their perfect intellectual agreement, but on account of the similarity of spirit by which they are swayed and governed. Mutual love or charity is the controlling element in each one; and where this reigns supreme, intellectual differences are but little regarded and cannot produce separation.

How, then, is the unity of Christ's church on earth to be established and maintained? Not by securing the assent of all to the same creed or doctrinal formulas; for, so long as the Bible remains what it is, and men are differently endowed by birth, differently trained and educated, and subjected, as they ever must be, to different moral and religious influences, it is vain to expect a perfect uniformity in their doctrinal beliefs. Such uniformity is simply impossible, so long as perfect freedom of thought and fidelity to one's convictions are encouraged and maintained. Nor is it desirable, or at all necessary to the unity of the church. What is most desirable and most needed, is, not a complete uniformity of belief among Chris-

tians, but such an infusion of Christ's spirit into the hearts of all who profess to be His followers, as shall make them feel the relative insignificance of their doctrinal differences. What is needed is, not the overthrow and extinction of religious sects, but the destruction of the narrow and mischievous spirit of sect. Let creeds and denominational landmarks and denominational preferences remain—not, however, with the overshadowing prominence they have hitherto enjoyed. But let Christ descend with new and regenerating power into all the churches. Let the hearts of His people be so suffused with His love, that they shall forget creeds, or feel that doctrinal differences ought not and need not be a hindrance to Christian fellowship. Then will Christians of different names feel that they are, indeed, one body in Christ. Then will the unity of the church be established in reality though not in form—a unity all the more perfect because of the diversity which will continue to exist in doctrine and ritual. All will then be, and will feel themselves to be, of the Lord's *New* Church, because all will experience an influx of new life as a consequence of their new acknowledgment of the Lord in the hearts of all His children. Hear the illumined herald of the New Jerusalem on this subject. Writing a hundred years ago, he says:

"The several churches in the Christian world are distinguished by their doctrinals, and the members of

those churches have hence taken the names of Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, or the Reformed and Evangelical Protestants; with many others. This distinction of names arises solely from doctrinals, and would never have had place if the members of the church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor the principal point of faith. Doctrinals would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which they, who are true Christians, would leave to every one to receive according to his conscience; while it would be the language of their hearts, that *he is a true Christian who lives as a Christian*, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish, . . . and the kingdom of the Lord would be established on earth. The ancient church which existed immediately after the flood, although dispersed over several kingdoms, was of such a character; so that, notwithstanding they differed *much* from each other in respect to doctrinals, they still made charity the principal thing, and regarded each other's worship, not from the doctrinals of faith, but from the charity of life which entered into it."—*A. C.*, 1799.

Of similar purport is the following, where Swedenborg is urging the paramount importance of charity, and the consequence of assuming it as an *essential*.

"Let this truth be received as a principle, that love to the Lord and charity toward our neighbor are the essentials on which hangs all the Law and concerning which all the Prophets speak, and thus that they are the essentials of all doctrine and of all

worship, in this case the mind would be enlightened by innumerable things contained in the Word, which otherwise lie concealed in the obscurity of a false principle; yea, in this case all heresies would vanish and be done away, and out of many *there would be formed one church, howsoever differing as to doctrinals and rituals*, either flowing from the above essentials, or leading thereto. . . . Supposing this to be the case, all would be governed as one man by the Lord, for all would be as members and organs of one body, which, although they are not of similar form, nor of similar functions, have nevertheless relation to one heart on which they all depend both in general and in particular, be their respective forms ever so various. In this case, too, every one would say of another, *in whatsoever doctrine or in whatsoever external worship* he was principled, 'This is my brother: I see that he worships the Lord, and that he is a good man.'"—*A. C.*, 2385.

Such is the catholic teaching of the New Church. It does not insist on uniformity of belief, nor regard this as necessary to Christian fellowship, or to the unity of the church. Clearly defined as its own doctrines are, it nevertheless admits that a wide diversity of opinion on points of doctrine is quite compatible with Christian life and character; and would have us recognize as Christians "all who *live as* Christians, that is, as the Lord teaches," however they may disagree with us in their doctrinal beliefs;—and regard and treat as brethren all good men and humble worshippers of the Lord, "*in whatsoever doctrine*, or in whatsoever external worship" they be principled.

And not only so, but it teaches that when charity is regarded as *fundamental* in the church, "all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals will vanish;" and out of many churches distinguished by their doctrinals, "there will be formed *one* church, howsoever differing as to doctrinals and rituals;" and that this one church, like the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, will be more completely united, or a more perfect one, because of this diversity; just as the human body is a more perfect one, because of the diversity in form and function of the various organs that compose it.

CHAPTER V.

LIFE, NOT DOCTRINE, THE GROUND OF FELLOWSHIP IN THE ANCIENT CHURCHES.

When we consider the wide diversity which exists among men in respect to hereditary endowments, the different moral and religious influences by which they are surrounded from earliest infancy, the different intellectual training to which they are subjected, the different doctrines which are taught them by their parents and religious teachers, and the different ways in which the Word of God may be understood because of its adaptation to the infinitely diversified states of the human mind, we shall see how improbable it is that Christians will ever be brought to a perfect agreement as to their doctrinal beliefs. If all are left in freedom, and are encouraged to think for themselves, and permitted to avow their honest thought, there will ever remain considerable diversity of opinion, at least upon minor points of doctrine. Yet this diversity need not prevent or mar the unity of the church. It will not, if all regard charity as the primary thing. On the contrary, it will strengthen the union among Christians, and render it the more perfect.

How was it with the church in very ancient times? All did not then *believe* alike. They differed much in doctrine and ritual. Yet this difference did not divide them, because they were all principled in mutual love or charity. They were all, in the language of Holy Scripture, "of one lip, and their words were one"—which, according to the illumined Swedenborg, signifies that "they were all principled in one doctrine in general and in particular;" and that one doctrine was the doctrine of charity. For he adds: "The doctrine is one, when all are principled in mutual love and charity. Mutual love and charity are effective of unity or oneness, even among varieties, uniting varieties into one; for let numbers be multiplied ever so much, even to thousands and ten thousands, if they are all principled in charity or mutual love, they have all one end, viz., the common good, the kingdom of the Lord, and the Lord himself; in which case the varieties in matters of doctrine and worship are like the varieties of the senses and viscera in man, which contribute to the perfection of the whole."—(*A. C.*, 1285.) Again, this illumined writer, in the very commencement of his treatise, on "The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine," says: "I will, by way of introduction to the doctrine which follows, make some observations concerning the doctrine of charity as held by the ancients," which doctrine, he tells us, "is, at this day, with other excellent things, altogether lost." And then

he proceeds to tell us what the doctrine of charity among the ancients was:

"The doctrine of charity, which is the doctrine of life, was the essential doctrine in the ancient churches. And that doctrine conjoined all churches, and thereby formed one church out of many. For they acknowledged all those as members of the church who lived in the good of charity, and called them brethren, *however they might differ respecting truths*, which at this day, are called matters of faith."

Again:

"In ancient times there were several churches together, and a difference between them *as at this day* in regard to doctrinals; but still they made one in this, that they acknowledged love toward the Lord and charity toward their neighbor as the principal and very essential constituents of a church, and thus that doctrinals were not designed so much to direct their thoughts as to direct their lives; and when this is the case, that love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor, that is, the good of life, are made essentials with all and each individual, then churches, how many soever they be, make one, and each is then one in the kingdom of the Lord."—*A. C.*, 2982.

According to the catholic teachings of the New Church, then, perfect uniformity in men's doctrinal beliefs is not to be expected or aimed at. It does not exist even in heaven. No two angelic societies, and no two angels in any society, believe precisely alike.

"The Lord's spiritual kingdom in the heavens is various according to what appertains to faith, insomuch that there is not one society, nor even one in a society, who, in those things which relate to the truth of faith, is entirely agreed with others as to his ideas. Nevertheless the Lord's spiritual kingdom in the heavens is one; the reason is, because all account charity as principal. . . . . Whosoever is principled in charity, he loves his neighbor, and with regard to his dissenting from him in matters of belief, this he excuses, provided only that he lives in goodnesses and truths.—*A. C.*, 3267.

If, then, the angels do not entirely agree in their views of truth, why should we expect perfect agreement among men? Why should there not be as much diversity in the Lord's kingdom on earth as there is in the heavens? And this, too, without destroying the harmony or disturbing the peace of the church. The New Church tells us that this must needs be.

"With respect to the Lord's kingdom in the earths, that is, with respect to His church, the case is this: that, whereas it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, it must needs be various and diverse as to those doctrinals, viz., one society will profess one thing to be a truth of faith, because it is so said in the Word, another society will profess another thing for the same reason, and so forth; consequently the church of the Lord, inasmuch as it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, will differ in every different place, and this not only according to societies in general, but sometimes according to particular persons in each society; nevertheless, a difference in

doctrinals of faith is no reason why the church should not be one, provided only there be unanimity as to willing what is good and doing what is good." —*A. C.*, 3451.

Such is the uniform teaching of the heavenly doctrines. And how replete it is with the large and tolerant spirit of the gospel of Christ! We learn from it, that charity was the essential doctrine in the ancient churches, and that it so dominated over mere belief or faith, that all who lived in the good of charity were acknowledged as "members of the church," and were "called brethren, however they might differ respecting truths." We learn that the ancients, although "they differed *much* from each other in respect to doctrinals" (see *A. C.*, 1799), did not allow those differences to disturb their harmony or mar their peace. They called each other brethren, and felt and acted toward each other as brethren, notwithstanding their doctrinal differences. And the reason was, because all regarded charity as fundamental. And where this is the case, "the disagreements arising from mere doctrinals" vanish, or fail to exert a disturbing influence. (*Ib.*) Therefore the various churches among the ancients, notwithstanding their doctrinal differences, were closely bound to each other in the strong bonds of charity, and together formed one church. And it is a significant fact that Swedenborg, in the very commencement of that comprehensive and beautiful treatise, "On the

New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine," which, he assures us, "is the same with the doctrine that is in heaven," proceeds to explain the doctrine of charity as held by the ancients, "by way of *introduction* to the doctrine which follows." It is as if he had said: "The primary thing in that system of doctrines which I am about to unfold, and which it has pleased the Lord to reveal to me out of heaven, is the doctrine of charity. And in order that this doctrine may be better understood, I will here state in the outset what it was as held and practised in the ancient churches;—how it led those churches to tolerate a wide diversity of opinion in matters of faith—to regard and treat each other as brethren, notwithstanding this diversity;—and how, through its softening and uniting influence, out of many and various churches, various in respect to doctrine and ritual—it formed one harmonious and united church." And when, near the close of that introductory chapter, he adds, "that the doctrine of charity, which among the ancients was held in such estimation, is, at this day, with other excellent things, altogether lost; for who, at this day, is aware what charity is in the genuine sense of the term?"—yet "the whole Sacred Scripture is nothing else than the doctrine of love and charity, which the Lord also teaches" (Matt. xxii. 37–39)—it is as if he had said: "Now, this ancient doctrine of charity, which I have just explained, and which at this day is utterly unknown—certainly is not prac-

tised—in the churches of Christendom, is, in the New Jerusalem, to be restored to its original pre-eminence. It is the essential doctrine of the Word of God. In the New Church, as in the churches of ancient times, this is to be held paramount to every other doctrine. And it is to achieve results or operate effects in the New Church, similar to those which it produced in the ancient churches. It will manifest itself, or reveal its genuineness, in similar ways. It will lead all who are really of the New Jerusalem to tolerate a wide diversity of opinion in matters of faith—for so did the ancient churches. It will lead them to think less of what people *believe*, than of how they *live*. It will cause them to acknowledge and treat as brethren all good men of whatever name or creed;—to recognize as Christians, and as worthy members of the church of Christ, all who live *like* Christians, whatever be their doctrinal beliefs."

I submit that what is here put into the mouth of Swedenborg, is but a fair and legitimate inference from the manner in which he introduces and closes his remarks upon the doctrine of charity in that Introductory Chapter of the treatise on "the New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine." And this inference is amply sustained by a multitude of passages which might be cited from the heavenly doctrines, in which the paramount importance of charity is insisted on. Note, for example, the following, which might be multiplied indefinitely:

"If the members of the church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor the principal point of faith, doctrinals would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which they, who are true Christians, would leave to every one to receive according to his conscience; while it would be the language of their hearts, that he is a true Christian who *lives as a Christian*, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus one church would be formed out of all these diverse ones, and all disagreements arising from mere doctrinals would vanish."—*A. C.*, 1799.

"There are two things which conjoin the men of the church, viz., life and doctrine; when life conjoins, doctrine [i. e. *difference* in doctrine] does not separate; but if only doctrine conjoins, as at this day is the case, within the church, then they mutually separate and make as many churches as there are doctrines. . . . But that doctrine doth not separate, if life conjoins, is evident from this, that he who is in goodness of life [i. e. in charity] doth not condemn another who is of another opinion, but leaves it to his faith and conscience, and extends this rule even to those who are out of the church; for he saith in his heart that ignorance cannot condemn any, if they live in innocence and mutual love."—*Ib.*, 4468.

"It is evident what another face the church would have, if the good of charity was in the first place, that is, was an essential, and the truth of faith in the second, that is, was the formality thereof. The face of the church would then be as the face of the ancient church, which made the church to consist in charity, and had no other doctrinals of the church than those of charity."—*Ib.*, 6761.

Then, how emphatically does Swedenborg condemn the practice of the churches of his day, who, he says, "separate themselves according to dogmas, and he who believes otherwise than as the dogma teaches, is cast out from their communion, and is defamed."—(*A. C.*, 4689.) And he declares that if charity (involving, as true charity ever must involve, love to the Lord) were received as a fundamental, and the practice of the churches were in accordance therewith, as it is to be in the New Jerusalem, there would be no such thing as *dealing* with men, or excommunicating them, on account of alleged heresies. Indeed, *heresies* would not be named or thought of. "In this case," he says, "all heresies would vanish and be done away, and out of many there would be formed one church, *howsoever differing as to doctrinals and rituals.*" (*Ib.*, 2385.) And speaking of the schisms and heresies which had arisen with the decline of the Christian church, he says: "These would never have existed, if charity had continued to live and rule; for in such case they would not have called schism by the name of schism, nor heresy by the name of heresy, but they would have called them doctrinals agreeable to each person's particular opinion, or way of thinking, which they would have left to every one's conscience, not judging or condemning any for their opinions, provided they did not deny fundamental principles, that is, the Lord, eternal life, and the Word, and maintained nothing contrary to

divine order, that is, contrary to the commandments of the Decalogue."—(*Ib.*, 1834.)

But it is needless to multiply extracts. The writings of Swedenborg abound in just such teaching. And was ever a broader or more beautiful Christian catholicity inculcated? In view of such teaching, we are prompted to ask: On which side lies our greatest danger? On the side of excessive toleration—a too broad catholicity? or on that of a too narrow sectarianism, and a too stringent exclusiveness? On which of these sides *has* the nominal New Church gone farthest astray? Has it been on the side of excessive catholicity? Have those among us who have been most complained of on account of what was supposed to be an excess of liberality, ever gone beyond Swedenborg in their inculcations of liberalism? I think not.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ANCIENT CATHOLICITY—POORLY EXEMPLIFIED IN THE NOMINAL NEW CHURCH.

In the last chapter I exhibited something of the catholicity of the ancient churches. I showed, by quotations from Swedenborg, what were the nature and fruits of charity as it existed in those churches; and what, by necessary inference, must be some of its fruits in any and every church where it is restored to its ancient pre-eminence. Let the reader refresh his mind by a reperusal of the quotations referred to. They cannot be read too often, nor pondered too thoughtfully. They are pregnant with most valuable instruction for all the humble followers of the Lord Jesus—and instruction, too, of high practical moment.

It will be noticed that one of the fruits of charity, as held and practised among the ancients, and one to which Swedenborg has given special prominence, is this: That it prevented all unhappy discords and disagreements among those who "differed *much* from each other in respect to doctrinals," and out of many various churches—various as to doctrine and ritual—it formed one harmonious and united church.

It opposed an insuperable barrier to the growth of everything like our modern sectarianism. It left no room for heresy or schism. It made not a particular creed or profession of faith, but *a good life,* the needful qualification for church membership. It caused all who lived in the good of charity, to be acknowledged and to acknowledge each other as brethren, "however they might differ respecting truths." It prevented all fault-finding, and condemning, and maligning, and defaming, and persecuting, and ostracising on account of supposed or alleged errors of opinion—vices which have been so rife and have proved so disastrous in the modern church. For they who are in genuine charity do not excommunicate or condemn those of a different opinion from themselves. "He who is in goodness of life, doth not condemn another who is of another opinion, but leaves it to his faith and conscience."—(*A. C.*, 4468.) While they who are *not* in charity, "condemn all, without distinction, whose sentiments, or, as they term it, *belief*, do not accord with their own."—(*Ib.*, 1798.) We are further taught that those who regard charity as fundamental, and in whose hearts it bears sovereign sway, are not disturbed by alleged heresies, and do not, indeed, call them by the name of heresies, but simply "doctrinals agreeable to each person's particular opinion or way of thinking, which they are willing to leave to every one's conscience, not judging or condemning any for their opinions, provided they do not deny fundamen-

tal principles," and maintain nothing contrary to the ten commandments.—*Ib.*, 1834.

Now, in the church of the New Jerusalem, this ancient doctrine of charity is to be restored to its original pre-eminence. We have Swedenborg's authority for this averment. And when it is restored, we may expect to see the fruits of it, such as they were in ancient times. We may expect a catholicity similar to that which the ancient churches exhibited.

But when we look at the nominal New Church as it exists at present, we cannot fail to notice a sad contrast between it and the ancient churches in point of catholicity. We are compelled to acknowledge a most remarkable deficiency in those fruits of charity which were so conspicuous in ancient times, and to which Swedenborg has given such special prominence. It is conceded that there are a great many good and charitable persons in the various Christian denominations—humble followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose constant purpose and chief delight it is to do His will. It is conceded that "there is a great multitude," whose "effort is to live well;" who "act from religious principles;" who "shun evils as sins against God;" who "reverence and love the Scriptures;" who "read them with affection, with faith, and with a desire to conform to the instruction which is there given them;" who "attend upon religious ordinances, and conscientiously perform all the duties of

life." (See *New Jerusalem Magazine* for July, 1847, p. 480.) All this is conceded, because its truth is too obvious to be denied.

And now, how do we, as a church, behave toward these good people? Do we extend to them the hand of Christian fellowship? Do we regard and treat them as brethren? Do we act toward them as if we really believed them to be Christians in any proper sense? Far from it. It is a melancholy and most humiliating fact, that, in our ecclesiastical proceedings and public official documents, as well as in letters and private conversations, and not unfrequently in our sermons, we talk as if we believed that all the genuine followers of the Lord Jesus Christ are to be found in our *Swedenborgian* ranks. Those who differ from us in doctrine, are not acknowledged or treated by us as Christian brethren. However pure and devoted their lives—however much of the Master's spirit they may exhibit in their daily walk and conversation—however meek, and gentle, and forbearing, and self-denying, and humble, and charitable, they may be—we do not regard or treat them as brethren. We do not consider them as really belonging to the Christian church, unless they *believe* the very doctrines we profess. And then they must be *baptized by the hands of a professed New Church minister*. We do not consider baptism, when administered by any other than Swedenborgian hands, as valid, or as properly Christian baptism. Hence we

are in the habit of requiring all who desire to connect themselves with the visible or nominal New Church, to be baptized by one of our own ministers, however they may have been previously baptized in some other communion. What is this but a most emphatic denial of everything like Christian fellowship with, and an emphatic refusal of brotherly recognition to, all other Christians? — and this, too, merely on the ground of *difference in doctrinals.* And consistently enough, we talk of all other Christians as belonging, not to a living, but a dead and consummated church—to a church that has been "left" of the Lord, and is, therefore, *no* church; and which some of our ministers are in the habit of comparing to "a dead carcass." And, stranger and more melancholy still, some who have joined the nominal New Church, and who believe and love its doctrines, but are constrained to differ from the majority of their brethren on some points, such as the whereabout of the true church, the trine in the ministry, the necessity of re-baptism, the eternity of the hells, and other points of minor importance, have, on account of such difference, been defamed, persecuted, disowned, virtually excommunicated, by the majority. The common rights and privileges of Christian brethren are denied them. The columns of New Church journals, which are freely opened to all who will advocate the exclusive claims of Swedenborgians to be considered the true church, the

necessity of re-baptism, the infallibility of Swedenborg's teachings, an official trine in the ministry essential to true order in the church, the eternity of the hells, &c.—are effectually closed to all who entertain and desire to express different views. No matter how profound the convictions of these latter, how forcible their arguments, how well-sustained by quotations from Swedenborg, how kind their words, or how courteous their manner, they are denied the privilege which is freely accorded to their brethren. They are shut out of the journals aforesaid, and refused a hearing before the very tribunal where they are arraigned. Their views are pronounced erroneous, and so are rejected and condemned unheard. Unpleasant feelings are thereby awakened. Prejudice is arrayed against innocent and deserving parties. A sense of injustice and wrong is experienced. Charity is wounded. Truth suffers damage—certainly is not extended or prospered. Free minds are cramped and dwarfed. Generous hearts are discouraged; and much available force in the church is, in a measure, lost or thrown away.

These things are not creditable to the New Church. They are disgraceful. They are as contrary to the spirit and teaching of the heavenly doctrines, as darkness is to light, or hell to heaven. It is a shame that such things can be done by those professing the catholic doctrines we hold, and not call forth a loud, indignant, and long-continued protest. No wonder, in view of

such facts, that we of the nominal New Church have gained the reputation of being one of the most illiberal, exclusive, and bigoted of all the Sects. No other people ever professed doctrines which inculcate such a broad and beautiful catholicity as do ours. Yet how signally have we failed to give a practical illustration of this catholicity! We have seen what the catholicity of the ancient churches was. And we may know, therefore, what that of the New Church ought to be and is to be. Yet a glance at the nominal New Church as it exists at present—at its theory and practice—will show that the gulf between the rich man and Lazarus was not wider than is that between this Church and the Ancient Churches in point of catholicity. But whatever narrowness or bigotry may be justly chargeable to New Church people, it is certain that nothing of this sort can be charged to Swedenborg or his teachings. The fault is wholly with the people, and not at all with the doctrines they profess — doctrines, which, in respect to catholicity, perhaps, more than in any other respect, the receivers as a body have signally failed to exemplify.

CHAPTER VII.

PROFESSED SOLIFIDIANS MAY LIVE THE LIFE OF CHARITY.

It is conceded that the doctrine of justification by faith alone is a great and pernicious error; and there is no doubt that it has produced infinite mischief in the Christian church. For it has taught that if people only *believe* aright, they will certainly be saved; and thus it has made salvation to depend solely upon *belief* or *faith*. It is this doctrine, which, according to Swedenborg, has so darkened the minds of the men of Christendom in respect to spiritual things, and brought the church into a state of unutterable desolation. It is this, he assures us, which, more than any other, has contributed to undermine and destroy the church. Therefore, in exposing and commenting upon the numerous errors into which the great body of Christians in his day had fallen, there is no one of which he speaks with greater severity, or to which he attributes greater power of mischief, than this doctrine of justification by faith alone. Thus he says: "That there is at this day so great darkness throughout the Christian churches, that the sun gives no light by day, nor the moon and

stars any light by night, is occasioned solely by the doctrine of justification by faith alone; for it inculcates faith as the only means of salvation."—(*B. E.*, 79.) And, speaking of the real quality of this doctrine, as viewed interiorly, he says, it is one "into which neither the law of the Decalogue, nor charity, nor good works, nor repentance, nor desires after newness of life, have any entrance" (*ib.*); and that, although it is asserted that these things "spontaneously follow," it is, at the same time, held that they are "without any use either to preserve faith or to procure salvation."—*Ib.*

Such, then, is the interior and real nature of the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Yet this doctrine, we know, holds a conspicuous place in the creeds of a great number of Christian churches in our own day, as it did in the time of Swedenborg. Indeed, it is not only *professed* by a very great multitude of Christians, but is regarded by many as one of the fundamentals of the Christian religion.

What, then, is the inference to be drawn from all this? Are we to conclude that all those who belong to the churches wherein the doctrine of faith alone is professed, are interiorly of a like quality with the doctrine itself? Are we to suppose that all such must necessarily be without charity, or good works, or repentance, or a desire for newness of life? Are we to infer that they must needs be enemies of God and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel? This, we

are aware, is the strange conclusion to which not a few nominal New Churchmen have arrived. They point to what Swedenborg has said of the nature and destructive tendency of this doctrine, and straightway conclude that all who profess to believe it—all who have subscribed a creed of which this is a part—must needs be as bad as the doctrine itself. Strange, too, that they should draw such an inference. For they certainly do not employ the same bad logic in other cases. They do not reckon as true Christians all who *profess* Christianity; nor do they regard as angels all who *profess* the doctrines of the New Church. Yet why not, if people are to be judged by their professions, or mere *beliefs*? If a mere profession of belief in the doctrine of justification by faith alone, is to be accepted as evidence that the believer's heart is as bad as the doctrine itself, then why should not a mere profession of belief in the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, be received as evidence of the heavenly character of the believer? Why should not a mere profession of the Christian religion prove every such professor a true Christian?

But a glance at existing facts patent to all eyes, is sufficient to convince one of the fallacy of such reasoning. It is easy enough to point to Swedenborgians who are by no means angels; and it is equally easy to point to multitudes who profess the solifidian creed, whose characters *are* quite angelic. It cannot be

denied, I think, that some of the best men and women upon earth—some of the meekest, gentlest, purest, humblest, most patient, devoted and Christ-like —are to be found in the very churches where the doctrine of salvation by faith alone is acknowledged and taught. And it is equally certain that there are *some*, who, if not scoundrels, are certainly not saints, who accept, or profess to accept, the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem.

Doctrines, then, or people's professions of belief, are no certain criterion by which to judge of the real character of the believers. Men may *believe* like angels, yet *live* like devils. And so, on the other hand, they may profess great errors, and really think they believe them; yet they may hold the errors in such a way as to receive little or no harm from them. They may live so near to God—may have their hearts so imbued with His spirit—may seek so earnestly to do His will, that the falsities which they believe or profess, *will not be falsities with them;* or *if* falsities, they will be accepted of the Lord for truths, and their malevolence be warded off by His power and presence. Such persons are of the number of those, of whom the Lord speaks, when he says: "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

If, now, we turn to the writings of Swedenborg, we shall find all, and more than all, that has here been stated, to be amply sustained by his catholic

teachings. We shall not find him, like many of his readers and admirers—many who are popularly known as *Swedenborgians* — condemning indiscriminately all who profess the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and placing them without the pale of the Christian church. On the contrary, we shall find him freely and often conceding that there are many excellent people who profess this doctrine—people, whose lives are so imbued with the good of charity, that this error with them loses its inherent malevolence, and becomes quite harmless. Hear him:

"It is said that faith alone saves, which in itself is false, especially with the evil, who thereby exclude the good of charity, as if it contributed nothing at all to salvation; but this false grows mild with those who are in the good of life; for they apply it to good, saying that faith alone saves, but that it is not faith unless together with its fruit, consequently unless where good is."—*A. C.*, 8311.

Again, speaking of some innocent and right-minded people, who "make a profession of faith [i. e. of "faith alone,"] and think nothing of charity, by reason that they are so instructed by their teachers, and do not know what charity is," he says:

"Nevertheless these same persons live in the life of charity toward their neighbor, because they live in the life of good; it is *no hurt* to such that they make profession of faith, and consider it to be saving, like others; for in their faith there is charity, whereby is signified all the good of life, both in general and in particular."—*Ib.*, 2388.

Again, this illumined author teaches, that, among those who profess the solifidian doctrine, there is a difference as wide as that between heaven and hell. Some of them are desperately wicked, and act in conjunction with evil spirits; while others, professing the very same doctrine, strive to live according to the precepts of the Word, and are, therefore, internally associated with angels. Speaking of the former of these classes, he says:

"They who think, believe, and *live* from the doctrine of faith alone, and of justification thereby, have no respect to God in their lives but only to self and the world; and they who look only to self and the world in the course of their life, adjoin themselves to the hells, for all who are in the hells make no account either of good or evil. In a word, for men *to live* from that doctrine is to confirm themselves in the life, that it is of no consequence to think, to will, or to do good, inasmuch as salvation is not from that source."—*Ap. Ex.*, 233.

But our author assures us "that there are *very few* who thus *live* from doctrine, although it is believed by the preachers that all who hear their preachings are under their influence." And this, he says, "is of the divine providence of the Lord." Even in his day, "the greater part" of Christians belonging to churches wherein the solifidian doctrine was believed and taught, were not principled in that doctrine—did not really understand it—or held it in such a way as rendered it quite harmless. Thus he says:

"The greater part of those who are born within the churches where the doctrine of faith alone, and of justification thereby, is received, do not know what faith alone is, nor what is understood by justification. Wherefore when they hear these things from their teachers, they think that a life according to the precepts of God in the Word, is thereby understood; for they believe this to be faith, and also justification, not entering more deeply into the mysteries of doctrine. Such persons, also, when they are instructed concerning faith alone, and concerning justification thereby, believe no otherwise than that faith alone is to think concerning God and salvation, and how they ought to *live;* and that justification is *to live before God.*"—*Ib.*

And this, we are told, was the comparatively harmless way in which the doctrine of faith alone was held by "*the greater part*" of those within the Christian Church in Swedenborg's own day. And in another place, he tells us that these people, whose purpose it is to keep God's commandments, although professing the doctrine of faith alone, really constitute "the church which is called the New Jerusalem," and which, he says, "is *to tarry among* those who are in the doctrine of faith separate from charity, while it grows to the full, until provision is made for its reception among greater numbers."

"But in that church there are dragons who separate faith from good works, not only in doctrine but also in life; whereas the rest in the same church, who live the life of faith which is charity, are *not*

dragons, although *among* them; for they know no other than that it is agreeable to doctrine that faith produces the fruits, which are good works, and that the faith which justifies and saves is to believe those things which are in the Word, *and to do them.*"—*Ap. Ex.*, 765.

Thus we see that the herald of the New Jerusalem does not unchurch all who profess the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, though he declares this to be one of the most pernicious of all the errors that have crept into the Christian church. He does not, like many of his professed followers, call all the believers of this doctrine *dragons*. On the contrary, he assures us "that there are *very few* who *live* from the doctrine," and that "the greater part" of those who profess it, "are *not* dragons, although among them;" —that they generally understand that justifying and saving faith "is to believe those things which are in the Word, and *to do* them." And he even goes so far as to say, that these people—who are, be it remembered, *the greater part* of the faith-alone professors—constitute, in our day, "the church which is called the New Jerusalem;" for no one will pretend that this church has yet "grown to the full." These constitute the *real*, in contradistinction to the professed or *nominal*, New Jerusalem.

So sensible and discriminating is Swedenborg! So just, and reasonable, and consistent, and catholic, are his teachings! So free from the least taint of nar-

rowness or bigotry! If the receivers of his doctrines had given good heed to their comprehensive and beautiful charity, if they had, in their intercourse with other Christians, and in their own ecclesiastical deliberations and decisions, exemplified their large and truly catholic spirit, *would* the New Church in America have gained the unenviable reputation it now enjoys? Should we be looked upon as one of the most narrow, exclusive, and bigoted of all the sects? I doubt it.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOMINAL TRIPERSONALISTS MAY KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.

Among the great and fundamental errors into which the Christian Church had fallen prior to the year 1757, was that concerning the Divine Trinity. The doctrine on this subject, which had been accepted by Christians almost universally, was that set forth in the Athanasian creed, in which it was distinctly taught that God is *tripersonal*, or exists as three distinct persons. That creed says: "There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost"—three persons in one God. And Swedenborg says: "Every one who reads this creed with his eyes open, may perceive that a trinity of gods was the only trinity thought of by those who composed the Council of Nice, whence this creed, as a posthumous birth, was first introduced into the church." And he adds: "That no other trinity [than a trinity of gods] is understood throughout all Christendom, is a necessary consequence of making that creed the standard of knowledge respecting God, to which every one pays an implicit obedience." He further says, that, "as a chain depends on the staple

from which it hangs, so does the whole body of theology depend on a right idea of God as its head;" and that "every one has a place in heaven according to his idea of God." And if his idea of God be altogether incorrect, he cannot be in heaven. "No one in heaven can pronounce such a phrase as a trinity of persons, each whereof singly is God; for the heavenly atmosphere . . . would refuse to give utterance to such an expression."—*T. C. R.*, 174.

And, speaking of the pervasive and pernicious influence of this false notion concerning the Trinity, the same author says: "The present faith of the church, which in its internal form is a faith in three Gods, but in its external form in one God, has extinguished the light of the Word, and removed the Lord from His church, and thus plunged its morning into midnight darkness."—(*Ib.*, 177.) And the prayers of those who cherish this false notion of the Trinity, are represented as of no avail—as not attended to, or not ascending to heaven. "The prayers also of every man that lives in a Christian country, and does not believe on the Lord, are henceforth not attended to, but are in heaven like ill-scented odors, or like eructations from corrupted lungs; and although he may fancy that his prayer is like the perfume of incense, yet, in its ascent to the angelic heaven, it is but like the smoke of a chimney, which, by the violence of the wind, is driven into the eyes of men below; or like incense from a censer under a monk's cloak. This is

the case from henceforward with all worship which is directed toward a Trinity of distinct persons, and not toward a Trinity conjoined in one person."—*Ib.*, 108.

Again, he says: "A division of the Divine Trinity into persons has introduced not only night, but also death into the church. . . . It is a truth, that, to implant in children and young people the idea of three divine persons, to which is unavoidably annexed the idea of three Gods, is to deprive them of all spiritual milk, and afterward of all spiritual meat, and lastly of all spiritual reason; and the consequence is, spiritual death to all those who confirm themselves in such an opinion. . . . He who confirms himself in a plurality of Gods, by a plurality of persons, becomes by degrees like a statue moved with movable joints, in the midst of which Satan stands, and speaks through its artificial mouth."—*Ib.*, 23.

Now, from passages like these in the writings of Swedenborg, many professed New Churchmen have concluded that all Christians at the present day, who belong to churches in which the tripersonality of God is acknowledged, are necessarily believers in and worshippers of three Gods; and therefore in a state of spiritual darkness, alienation, and death—mere carcasses, or forms filled and animated by the spirit of Satan; that their prayers either do not ascend to heaven, or ascend as "ill-scented odors," and not as sweet perfume; that the Lord is far removed from

all such, and therefore they are left in a state of midnight darkness. Even ministers of the nominal New Church have believed and taught that the Lord has actually "left" all such Christians, and no longer has His abode with them.*

But when we turn our eyes to the churches in question—when we see the host of noble men and women whose names are enrolled there—when we consider how much of the Master's spirit multitudes of them exhibit—how much of all that is righteous, and holy, and gentle, and self-denying, and pure, and good on earth, they embody—we are sure that there must be some grand mistake in this matter. We are sure that, whatever Swedenborg may have said, the Lord has *not* "left" all these people. We recognize

* In a "Report of the Ordaining Ministers [of the General Convention] on Baptism," published a few years ago, we find the following language—and the notion conveyed by it has been adopted by a large majority of nominal New Churchmen throughout our country;

"We learn [in the doctrines of the New Church] that the Lord was with it [i. e., the Old Church—meaning, by this, all other religious organizations except that of the professedly New Church] in all its states, until it came to an end, and that He then *left* it. Now, inasmuch as it was a church, and had authority to baptize and perform the other duties of a church, because *He was with it;* therefore, since He has *left* it, it has no authority or power to baptize or to perform any other church duty."—*New Jerusalem Magazine for July*, 1839, p. 379.

And in a pamphlet published by Rev. Thomas Wilks, in 1855, and commended by the organs of the General Convention of the New Church in this country, the writer repeats the same idea, and

among many of them abundant evidence of His quickening and life-giving presence. And when we look more critically into the writings of Swedenborg, we find that the mistake has arisen from a partial or superficial view of his teachings. We find abundant reason for believing that it has come from fixing the mind too intently upon a single class of passages like those above quoted, and overlooking or ignoring another large class which qualify and limit their meaning. It was in a similar way that the doctrine of salvation by faith alone originally crept into the Christian Church, viz.: by observing carefully all that is said in the Word about the importance of faith, and overlooking all that is said of the importance of charity. Tripersonalism is, undoubtedly, a

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with an emphasis and confidence not unusual among that class of persons to which Mr. Wilks evidently belongs. Thus he says:

"The first Christian Church [including, according to the writer, all the existing Christian denominations *except* Swedenborgians] is now dead; the Lord, who was her life, *has taken His departure from her*, and He therefore no longer acknowledges her as His; and, for this reason, those also who are in the truth, can no longer recognize her as a Christian Church. Not being in the acknowledgment of the Lord, and, therefore, *not Christian*, the men of this church, while they adhere to her doctrines to the rejection of the truths of the New Dispensation from their minds, can gain no admission into heaven, nor have any intercourse with the spirits of the redeemed there; for that, which was the cause of the *Lord's departure from them*, will necessarily exclude them from heaven, where the Lord is all in all."—p. 12.

How different—how entirely *opposite* is this from the sweet humility and beautiful catholicity of the New Jerusalem!

great and pernicious error; and all that Swedenborg has said of its hurtful tendency, is no doubt true. But we must not, therefore, conclude, that all who believe it, or *profess* to believe it, are therefore aliens from God, in a state of spiritual darkness and death, and incapable of offering a prayer acceptable to the Lord. This may be the case with some. But there are others who believe this doctrine in simplicity, because it appears to them to be plainly taught in the Word, but whose ruling purpose it is to do the will of God in all things; and these are not particularly harmed by it. And this, too, is in accordance with the catholic teachings of Swedenborg. He says expressly, "that there is *no harm* in believing the sense of the letter, although the internal sense teacheth otherwise, if it be done in simplicity of heart."—(*A. C.*, 2395.) And he also admits that the doctrine of three persons *is* in accordance with the teaching of the apparent or literal sense of the Word; for he says: "Hence also it is manifest, that, when there are *three* in the sense of the letter, there is only *one* in the internal sense, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are not three Gods, but one, and that in the Lord the whole Trinity (*Trinum*) is perfect."—(*A. C.*, 2663.) Here our author admits, that, according to the apparent truth in the literal sense, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are *three*, although the internal sense teaches that they are *one*. And since we are assured that "there is no harm in believing the

sense of the letter, if it be done in simplicity of heart," therefore there can be no harm in believing in simplicity, as multitudes of Christians do believe, the doctrine of three persons in one God.

Again: speaking of the innumerable varieties and differences in doctrinals among those who constitute the Lord's kingdom in heaven as well as upon earth, Swedenborg says: "They who are of the spiritual church . . . acknowledge for truths what they have learned from others, . . . and each abides in that doctrinal, and calls it true, which is taught in his own particular church." And since these do not enjoy internal perception, like those of the celestial church, therefore he adds: "It is not to be wondered at that they are disagreed about that most essential of all truths, viz., the Lord's Divine Human, and Holy Proceeding; the celestial perceive that they are not three but one; whereas the spiritual abide in the idea of *three*, yet are willing to think that they are one. Since, therefore, there are dissensions about this most essential point of all, it may appear that the varieties and differences of doctrinals are innumerable."—(*A. C.*, 3241.) And is a difference on "this most essential point of all," or the belief of the tri-personalists—those who "abide in the idea of *three*, yet are willing to think that they are one"—to be regarded as fatal to all spiritual life? Does such a belief—an error, though it be, upon a "most essential point"—necessarily shut out the Lord from the be-

liever's heart? Does it close his mind against the sweet influence of the angels? Does it preclude the possibility of his offering unto the Lord that most acceptable kind of sacrifice—the worship of a righteous and useful life? Does it close against him the gates of the Kingdom, and consign him to the realms of darkness, and render his prayers "like ill-scented odors, or like eructations from corrupted lungs"—unacceptable to the Lord? So far from this, Swedenborg immediately adds: "But notwithstanding there are so many varieties and differences of doctrinals [including even that of a tripersonal God, to which allusion had just been made], still they form together one church, when all acknowledge charity as the essential of the church, or, what is the same thing, when they have respect to life as the end of doctrine; that is, when they inquire how a man of the church *lives*, and not so much what are his *sentiments*." —*Ib.*

According to the authorized teachings of the New Church, then, men may differ "about that most essential of all truths"—the nature of the Divine Trinity—some believing it to be tripersonal, according to the apparent truth in the literal sense, and others holding to the unipersonality of God, as revealed in the internal sense—yet all may "acknowledge charity as the essential of the church," and may "have respect to life" as the great end of doctrine. And this is just what they *ought* to do—just what the spirit of the gospel of Christ requires them to do—just what the

dwellers in the New Jerusalem *will* do; and we are told that when they do this, "they form together *one church*."

Here we observe the same broad and beautiful catholicity as ever! The same acknowledgment of the supreme importance of *charity*, and of its power, when duly exalted, to demolish all those high sectarian barriers which have sprung from mere doctrinal differences, and out of many churches, various as to doctrine, to form one harmonious and united church. And if our nominal New Churchmen will be as catholic as are the doctrines they profess, they will not condemn even the tripersonalists, nor separate themselves from their company as though they were a people to be loathed and shunned; but, on the contrary, they will regard and treat them as brethren, and acknowledge them as the children of God and members of His church in so far as they live the life of charity, notwithstanding their erroneous belief concerning the Divine Trinity. This, clearly, is what the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem counsel. This is genuine *Swedenborgianism* — very different, no doubt, from much that passes under that name.

CHAPTER IX.

A PERTINENT DIGRESSION—WITH FURTHER ILLUSTRATIONS OF CATHOLICITY.

SWEDENBORG often speaks of the deplorable darkness into which the church of his day had been plunged, in consequence of the false doctrine it had imbibed concerning the Divine Trinity. He says, "that the present faith of the church, which in its internal form is a faith in three gods, but in its external form in one God, has extinguished the light of the Word, and removed the Lord from His church, and thus plunged its morning into midnight darkness." Such was the state of the church at the time when the great Seer lived and wrote. And many New Churchmen have jumped to the conclusion, that all the churches at the present time, which profess the doctrine of three persons in one God, are necessarily in a state of similar darkness. But this is a great mistake—a mistake which it only requires a little more familiarity with the authorized teachings of the New Church, to rectify.

The light which has come into the world in consequence of the Last Judgment, has penetrated all the churches in a greater or less degree. This is clear

from Swedenborg's own and oft-repeated declarations. Thus he says, "that, as long as the dragon with his crew continues in the world of spirits, into which he was cast, so long it is impossible for any divine truth, united with divine good, to pass through unto men on earth"—(*T. C. R.*, 182); from which it may fairly be inferred, that divine truth could and would pass from heaven to men *after* the dragon had been removed from the world of spirits. But we are not left to mere inference on this point. We are expressly assured, "that the state of the world *and of the church* [meaning all the churches] before the last judgment, was as evening and night, but after it, as morning and day."—(*Contin.*, *L. J.*, 13.) And the reason of this is distinctly stated. "So long as there were congregations of such spirits between heaven and the world, or between the Lord and the church, man was unable to be enlightened. It was as when a sunbeam is cut off by a black interposing cloud, or as when the sun is eclipsed, and its light arrested, by the interjacent moon. . . . Now since all these interposing congregations *were dissipated* by the last judgment, it is plain that the communication between heaven and the world, or between the Lord and the church, has been restored."—(*Ib.*, 11.) And one of the consequences of the restoration of this long interrupted communication, was, as might have been expected, a general enlightenment of the minds of men here on earth. "After the dragon was cast down. . . .

there was light in the world of spirits, because the infernal societies, *which were removed*, had been interposed like clouds which darken the earth. *A similar light also then arose in men in the world*, giving them new enlightenment."—(*Ib.*, 30.) That is, not a mere handful of people—not the few readers of Swedenborg's writings merely—but men generally received new enlightenment. And the churches, too, even those that still *profess* the doctrine of three persons in one God, have not failed of their share of this general illumination. Whatever their creeds may say, rely upon it the members of these churches *think* very differently now from what their predecessors before the last judgment thought. So that, while these churches, as to their creeds or outward profession, are similar to those that existed previous to 1757, yet their internal perceptions and heart convictions are entirely different. They see truth, which persons professing substantially the same doctrines a hundred years ago, had no conception of. And this, too, accords with the teachings of Swedenborg. For, speaking of the future state of the church, and the changes consequent upon the last judgment, he says:

"But as for the state of the church, this it is which will be dissimilar hereafter; it will be similar indeed in the outward form, but dissimilar in the inward. To outward appearance divided churches will exist as heretofore; their doctrines will be taught as heretofore; and the same religions as now will exist among

the Gentiles. But henceforth the man of the church will be in a more free state of thinking on matters of faith, that is, on spiritual things which relate to heaven, because spiritual liberty has been restored to him."—(*L. J.*, 73.)

From this we learn that the church (meaning all the various churches in Christendom) was to remain similar, in outward appearance, to what it had been. That is, the several churches would preserve substantially the same organization, the same creed, and the same ritual. They would, to outward appearance, continue divided as they had been, and would profess substantially the same doctrines as they had previously held. Yet *internally* these churches would be different from what they had been. That is, the people composing them would be in a different internal state, and would *think* differently from what they had thought upon religious topics, because of the greater "spiritual liberty" into which they had been brought. And no one, who regards attentively the character and condition of existing churches, can fail to see that this prediction has been fulfilled. Indeed it must be obvious to the most casual observer, that the people composing the various churches of our day, though professing substantially the same creeds which were held a hundred years ago, yet *think* or *believe* very differently from the men of that day upon nearly all religious subjects.

These remarks and quotations are made for the

purpose of showing that the habit, so prevalent among New Churchmen, of taking the language which Swedenborg used in reference to the church as it existed prior to the last judgment, and applying it to all the churches professing similar doctrines in our own day, is unauthorized and unjust. The language, clearly, is not applicable, *because* these churches are in quite a different state from those that existed a hundred years ago; or because, to cite Swedenborg's own language, though they are "similar in the outward form," they are "*dis*similar in the inward." When, therefore, it is said that the churches in Swedenborg's day were in terrible darkness because of the prevalence of this or that particular dogma, it must not be inferred that all who profess the same dogma now, are therefore in similar darkness. They are not. If Swedenborg wrote the truth in the passages here cited, they should not be. And careful observation of existing churches proves conclusively that they are not. However they may have retained their creeds for the most part unchanged, and preserved their external *status* generally, they have all undergone important internal changes within the last hundred years. They have all been moving Eastward by slow degrees—advancing into the light and warmth of the New Jerusalem. And in this opinion I am happy to find myself sustained by such excellent New Church authority as the Rev. Dr. Bailey of London. In the last of his "Twelve Discourses on Essays and Re-

views, &c.," after describing the nature of the New Dispensation, he proceeds:

"It will be seen to be no narrow sectarian denomination, but universal principles we have in view. New principles, which build up heaven in the human soul, and which will form society into harmony with themselves, thus making a new heaven and a new earth. We rejoice to observe these principles making their way, not only in the formation of a definite body of men, who designate themselves the New Church, or New Jerusalem Church, but also in the more enlightened and liberal doctrines and loving activities which are leavening all churches.

"A hundred years ago, religion seemed almost entirely dead, but now the signs of resurrection multiply around us. Compare the Church of England of to-day, though loaded with the grave-clothes of old times, earnest, thoughtful, active as she appears in a large number of her ministers and laity, liberalizing her institutions, chafing against the old forms and old creeds, as she appears from time to time now, in her meetings for reforms, and in her noblest productions, —compare her, we say, with the half-sensual, half-formal, miserable mass, which bore that name a century since, and we have a spectacle most delightful to contemplate. The icy incrustations of ages are moving, the refreshing spring of a new era is making its warm breath felt, and its brilliant light be seen. It is so in all churches and out of all churches. There is movement, life, everywhere. An increasing number, a minority, perhaps, yet, but a large minority, are as earnest to inculcate love to God and man, and the absolute necessity of good works in man's salvation, as if the article which declares man to be saved

by *faith alone*, did not form one of the thirty-nine."—pp. 24, 25.

But to return from this digression, to the subject more immediately under discussion.—

"Is it possible," some one will ask, "that people may profess the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and the doctrine of three persons in one God, and still be good Christians—still be in a regenerate state—still constitute a portion of the Lord's true church, and, as such, be entitled to our fraternal regard and Christian fellowship?" Certainly it is possible. And not only so, but it is in strict accordance with the teachings of the New Church, taking Swedenborg as its herald and exponent. "Well then," it may be rejoined, "if such great and pernicious falsities as these—falsities, which more than all others have contributed to darken and destroy the church—may be believed or professed without essential and permanent injury to the believer's heart and life, what heresies can you name that are really damning? If errors such as these do not necessarily interfere with the believer's regeneration nor prevent his salvation—if they do not shut him out from fellowship with the Lord and the angels, nor render it impossible for him to live an upright, holy, Christian life, then what errors can?" None whatever, answers the New Church—no mere error of the head. A pure and holy life is not necessarily incompatible with the be-

lief or profession of many and great errors. A belief in a tripersonal God as held and taught in many churches, does not necessarily prevent the believer from shunning evils as sins against God. Accordingly Swedenborg says: "It is however provided that every one, *in whatever heresy he may be with respect to his understanding*, may still be reformed and saved, provided he shuns evils as sins, and does not confirm heretical falsities in himself [which is done only by an evil life]; for by shunning evils as sins, the will is reformed, and by the will the understanding, which then first emerges out of darkness into light."—(*D. P.*, 259.) Again he says, "that they within the church may be regenerated by means *of any doctrine whatsoever*" (*A. C.*, 6765); and that, although "there are so many diverse dogmas and doctrinals, several of which are altogether heretical, *yet in every one of them* salvation is attainable."—(*Ib.*, 3993.) And we know that only those who have made some progress in regeneration, have conscience. The merely natural man has no conscience. Yet we are told that, "within the church there are *some of all denominations* who are endowed with conscience—though their conscience, nevertheless, is more perfect in proportion as the truths which form it approach nearer to the genuine truths of faith."—(*Ib.*, 2053.)

No: it is not mere errors of the head, be they ever so great, but depravity of heart—evils of life—which shut men out of the heavenly kingdom. This

the herald of the New Church repeatedly declares. "Heresies themselves," he says, "do not occasion man's condemnation; but an evil life, together with confirmations of the falsities contained in any heresy by misapplication of the Word, and by reasonings that originate in the natural man, are what condemn him."—(*D. S. S.*, 92.) And the reason, which is sufficiently obvious, is also given. "For every one by birth is introduced into the religion of his country, or of his parents, is initiated into it from his earliest years, and afterward continues in the same persuasion," "being prevented, by his engagements in the world," from extricating his mind therefrom. But "he who simply abides in the religion of his country, who believes in God, and (in case he be of the Christian Church) believes in the Lord, esteems the Word holy, and lives according to the commandments of the Decalogue from a religious motive, such an one does not bind himself to the falsities of the religion he professes."—(*Ib.*)

And is not this precisely the condition of a very large portion of the members of the various Christian churches in our day? People generally belong to the church in which they were born, and profess the doctrines which their parents and grand-parents professed, and which were taught them in their early childhood. And as many of them as strive to obey God in all things, and live according to the commandments of the Decalogue—and no doubt these are a

very large proportion—are not internally wedded to the false doctrines they profess, and therefore are not harmed by them. Their falses are unnoticed by the angels, for they are not falses of evil. Therefore they will be unnoticed by all on earth, whose character is closely allied to that of the angels—by all who would judge men by their works, rather than by their professions. Says Swedenborg:

"Inasmuch as the angels of heaven do not perceive anything else within man but his love, and thence his affection, desires, and delights, consequently his ends, on account of which he thinks in such or such a manner, therefore when they perceive with him the love of truth for the sake of the uses of life, which are the true ends, then they do not see any falses from evil; and if peradventure they see falses which are not from evil, still *they know that these falses do not hurt*, because evil is not in them. Falses which are derived from evil are the real falses from hell; the reason is, because these falses are forms of evil, and thus in themselves also are evils."—*Ap. Ex.*, 867.

When the members of the nominal New Church come to feel and act like the angels, they, too, will fail to notice the falses of such as are in the good of life, knowing that theirs are not falses from hell.

CHAPTER X.

HOW ERRORS OF THE HEAD ARE MODIFIED BY PURITY OF HEART.

It is known to Christians generally, and is often explicitly taught in the writings of the New Church, that all falses are from hell. As truth is spiritual light, so falsity is spiritual darkness. And because all the denizens of hell are in a state of falsity as well as of evil, therefore hell is described in the Word, and is usually thought of by Christians, as a realm of darkness. The darkness of hell is mental or spiritual darkness. And all whose minds are imbued with falsities, are in this darkness. As to their spirits, they are enveloped in the smoke of the abyss.

Accepting the truth of these general postulates, see how easy it is to prove that none but Swedenborgians can be in a heavenly state, because not in heavenly light, and therefore not properly Christians. The argument may be briefly stated thus:

The Old Church (meaning all existing churches except the nominally New), is in great falsities. Instance the tripersonality of God, the vicarious atonement, justification by faith alone, the resurrection of the material body, &c.

All who are in great falsities are in spiritual darkness, and hence must be in consociation with the spirits of darkness — with those who inhabit the abyss.

Therefore the Old Church (meaning as above) is in spiritual darkness, and cannot be consociated with spirits who inhabit the realms of light; hence its members cannot be recognized as belonging to the true Church of Christ.

This is a summary statement of the argument by which multitudes of Swedenborgians persuade themselves and each other, that there are no genuine followers of the Lord, no true Christians, outside of our own communion. But this argument entirely ignores a large class of passages in Swedenborg, which, if allowed their proper weight, would at once expose the fallacy involved in it. It also assumes that all who belong to churches into whose creeds false doctrines have been incorporated, are necessarily *in* those falsities, and therefore in darkness. But this assumption is altogether gratuitous. The truth undoubtedly is, that there are at the present day but few, comparatively, who are really *in* the falses they profess. The belief of the great majority of Christians in certain false dogmas, is, no doubt, more formal than real. They profess these dogmas because they were born in the church that held them, and because they early imbibed them from their parents and religious teachers. With the majority

they are not falses of evil, which we are told, are the only *real* falses; but they are falses of ignorance or of a misguided education. They are falses which have been *taught* them, and *therefore* have been accepted—or rather, have been *assented to*. But along with some great errors, it must ever be borne in mind that most Christians have received, through the medium of parents and religious books and teachers, as well as from the literal sense of the Word, some great and essential truths, which have not failed to produce their legitimate fruits. Very few Christians of the present day have been taught *nothing but error*. Indeed we are safe in saying that far more truth than error is taught in *all* the churches. In all the churches the simple precepts of the Gospel, including the commandments of the Decalogue, which comprehend the very essence of God's Word, are diligently taught; and through these, spite of the errors that are mingled with them (and where do we find unmingled truth?) multitudes of professing Christians have imbibed much of the genuine spirit of Christianity. And through the mighty power of Him from whom this spirit comes, the falsities which they have innocently received are so modified and softened that they can hardly be considered as falsities *with them*. They are not so considered by the angels. The Lord accepts their falsities for truths in the degree that they strive to do His will; and thus these falsities become in some measure receptive of good. Grant that they

are nothing but falsities as set forth in the creeds, and as believed by those who are in evils of life. Still, they are not altogether false as received and held by those who shun evils as sins: and these doubtless constitute a majority of believers. By this class of persons, these falsities are so understood as to be in some measure allied to truth, and conducive to good. In the minds of the recipients, they are, as Swedenborg says, "bended to good;" or, at least, the malevolence of the false is taken away, and they are rendered comparatively harmless. The writings of the New Church teach us that there is a heaven-wide distinction between the falses of such persons, or the falses of ignorance and education, and the falses that originate in evil lusts. Concerning the former Swedenborg says:

"Falses originating in ignorance are either a consequence of wrong instruction from infancy, or of a man's various engagements in worldly business, whereby he has been hindered from inquiring into the truth of the opinions he may have imbibed; or they may proceed from weakness of judgment, rendering him incapable of discerning between truth and falsehood. Falses of this kind are not attended with much hurt, provided a man does not confirm them by much reasoning and argument, and so persuade himself, under the influence of some evil lust, to favor and countenance them. . . . But the case is otherwise with falses originating in evil lusts, such as self-love and the love of the world."—*A. C.*, 1295.

Again, speaking of falses with those who are in the good of life, Swedenborg tells us that they are *not* falses when viewed interiorly; nor do they appear to the angels as falses, "but as a species of truth:"

"The falses which are not from evil, in the external form indeed are falses, but not in the internal; for there are falses given with those who are in the good of life, but interiorly in those falses there is good, which causes the evil of the false to be removed; hence that false before the angels *does not appear as the false, but as a species of truth;* for the angels look at the interior things of faith, and not at its exterior." —*Ib.*, 10648.

Of a similar purport is the passage (*A. C.*, 9809), where our illumined Scribe, speaking of those entertaining falses "who are in the sense of the letter of the Word, and remain in the doctrine thence, and still have the good of life for an end," says: "for this good as an end drives away all the malevolence of the false, and by application forms it into some resemblance of the truth."

And not only does the false, with those who have the good of life as an end, appear to the angels as *not* false, "but as a species of truth," but we are repeatedly told that this false is actually accepted of the Lord as truth. The following are a few of the passages in point:

"It is said the false from evil, because this false is truly the false; whereas, the false not from evil, but

from ignorance of the truth, is not such. Evil is that which is opposite to heaven, but not the false from ignorance; yea, if in ignorance there be anything of innocence, then, *that false is accepted of the Lord as truth;* for they who are in such, receive the truth." —*A. C.*, 6784.

"With respect to good, the case is this: goods are infinite in variety, and they have their quality from truths; hence the good becomes such as the truths are which enter; the truths which enter are seldom genuine, but are appearances of truth, and also are falses, but still not opposite to truths; nevertheless, when these flow in, into good, which is the case when the life is formed according to them from ignorance, in which ignorance is innocence, and when the end is to do good, in this case they are regarded by the Lord, and in heaven, *not as falses*, but as bearing a resemblance to truth, and according to the quality of innocence *are accepted as truths*"—*Ib.*, 7887.

"There are falses *which are received as truths* when good is in them, especially the good of innocence, as among the Gentiles, and also among several within the Church."—*Ib.*, 4736.

"Falses with those who are in evil are falses of evil, and truths with them are truths falsified, which are dead. But falses with those who are in good, *are accepted as truths*, for they receive mildness from good, and are applied to good uses."—*Ib.*, 10109.

"Moreover there are truths which are only appearances of truths, such are those of the literal sense of the Word, which are also *accepted of the Lord as genuine truths* when there is in them the good of love to the Lord, and the good of love toward the neighbor, or charity."—*Ap. Ex.*, 625.

Now, in view of passages like these, what becomes of that severe Swedenborgian logic—so prevalent, and by many deemed so conclusive—whereby it is proved that all who believe or profess to believe certain popular religious errors, are necessarily without the pale of the Christian Church, and in consociation with the spirits of darkness? We are safe in saying that it is logic which Swedenborg himself would never indorse. For he saw that, with multitudes of these people—with all, indeed, who shun evils as sins, and strive to live a righteous life—the falses they profess are *not* falses with them; that they appear to the angels as "a species of truths," and are accepted of the Lord as truths. And if the Lord and his angels do not reject those, who are in the good of life, on account of the false doctrines they profess, then why should we? If in heaven the falses professed by such people are disregarded, or are looked upon not as falses but as a species of truths, then how ought they to be looked upon by those on earth who accept the doctrines of heaven?

It is impossible to read the extracts here made from the writings of Swedenborg, without admiring the unspeakable wisdom and mercy of the Lord, and the broad and beautiful catholicity of the New Church.

CHAPTER XI.

TRUTHS ARE NOT TRUTHS WITH ALL WHO ACCEPT THEM.

We have seen that the Heavenly teachings of the New Jerusalem abound in passages which assure us that people may be in the belief or profession of false doctrines, and yet live the life of charity. Can any one doubt that there are multitudes of such in the various Christian communions? And according to the teachings of the New Church, these good people should be regarded and treated as brethren; for they *really*, though not *nominally*, belong to the Church of the New Jerusalem, notwithstanding Swedenborg declares that, in it "there will not be any falsity of faith." In reality these people *are not in* falses of faith. The falses which they *profess*, not being falses of evil, are not really falses with them. They do not enter into their life. They are by no means in agreement with the good of charity in which they are principled. They are not really loved, but repudiated by them, internally. They are only in the memory, or outermost court of the mind. Therefore these people are not really *in* the falses they profess, and which they therefore *seem* to be in, because the falses are not really *in them*, not being in their hearts. *At*

heart they are in the truth; for only the truth is in agreement with the good of charity in which they are. They *have* the truth, and in the only sure way, too, that a man *can* have it. They have it *in the life*. They have it written upon their hearts.

It would be easy to quote numerous passages from Swedenborg in confirmation of what is here affirmed. Let a very few extracts suffice.

"It is a canon," he says, "that the truths appertaining to those who are in evils of life, are falsified [i. e., are *not* truths with them], and the falses appertaining to those who are in good of life, are ver fied [i. e., are made true]; the reason why falses are verified with these latter is, because they are applied to agree with good, thus the rudeness [ruditates] of the falses themselves are wiped away; see n. 8051."—(*A. C.*, 8149.) "In proportion as a man is in goods of life, *in the same proportion he is really in truths of doctrine*," and that, too, without regard to his external profession.—(*A. R.*, 82.) "He who lives in charity toward the neighbor, though he may not be in the truth *as to doctrine*, still he *is* in the truth *as to life;* consequently there is in him the Lord's Church or Kingdom."—(*A. C.*, 3451.) Here it is distinctly taught that the Lord's Church or Kingdom may be in one who is *not*, i. e. professedly or doctrinally, in the truth. "Whosoever has the life of charity, knows [internally] all things appertaining to faith."—(*Ib.*, 1798.) "The false, with those who are

in the good of life, does not appear *as the false* before the angels, but as a species of truth" (ib. 10648); and the reason assigned is because "interiorly in the false there is good, which causes the evil of the false to be removed."

Clearly, then, according to the teachings of the New Church, a man may be externally and apparently in great falsities, and yet internally and really he may be *in the truth.* Therefore he may be in great heresies by *profession*—by his *creed*—by what appears *externally*, and at the same time be really a member of the Church of the New Jerusalem, although it is declared that in this church "there will not be any falsity of faith." If he is in the good of life, though his *head* may be in heresies, his *heart* certainly is not. Internally he is in the truth.

"Well"—I hear it whispered by some of my Swedenborgian brethren—"if this be so, if some who are externally in falses of doctrine may yet be internally in the truth, and so be really, though not nominally, in the Church of the New Jerusalem, then why may not some, who are externally and professedly in the truths of the New Jerusalem, be internally in falses, and therefore really *without* the walls of the Holy City, though nominally within? If the falses which a man believes do not necessarily determine his spiritual *status*, or prove him to be without the pale of the true Church, then why should the truths he believes, prove him to be within its pale?

And why, in that case, may not many professed or nominal New Churchmen be *really* outside of this church, after all?"

Why not, indeed? I not only admit the justness of the inference implied in these interrogatories, but I cannot for a moment doubt that such is the fact. I doubt not but there are many nominal New Churchmen—many who understand and accept the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, who are internally and really far removed from this Church. Why should it not be so? seeing that *doctrine*, however pure and heavenly, does not constitute the Church. If men may believe false doctrines, and still live near to God and heaven, then why may they not believe true doctrines, and yet live near to hell? And if the former are within, then the latter must be *without*, the pale of the true Church, though the doctrines they profess be the very doctrines of heaven. And this reasonable and logical inference is abundantly sustained by the teachings of Swedenborg. The following are a few passages in point:

"There are, indeed, in the Church several who *say* that charity is the essential of the Church, and not faith separate; but to *say* it and *believe* it, and *not to live the life* of charity, is only to *say* that it is, and not *to make it* the essential; wherefore they are in the same situation as those who say that faith is the essential, for with them charity is of faith alone, and not of the life [that is to say, such persons are really

in faith alone, though they profess a different doctrine.] *Ap. Ex.*, 107.

"Truths are not given without good, for truths derive their life from good. The truths belonging to a man who is not principled in good, are indeed truths in themselves, but *they are not truths in him.*"—*Ib*, 48.

"He who is in evil as to life, is [internally and really] in the false as to doctrine. It may, indeed, seem otherwise to themselves, who are in evil of life; for when they make a lip-profession of truths from the Word, or from the doctrinals of their church, they suppose that they are *in the belief* of those truths. It appears also to them as if they were; but still *they are not if the life be evil.* . . . Falses agreeing with the evil of lusts have place *interiorly* with those who live wickedly. That this is the case is manifested clearly in the other life, when externals are there taken away, and such persons are left to their interiors; in which case falses burst forth, as well those which they had thought in the world, as those which they had not manifestly thought."—*A. C.*, 7577.

"That truths, which in themselves are truths, with one person are more true, with another less true, with some altogether untrue, yea, false, may appear from almost all those things which in themselves are true, inasmuch as they are with every man according to his affections."—(*Ib.*, 2439.) "Truth with man is altogether according to the principle of good which appertains to him."—*Ib.*, 2429.

"Truths appertaining to those who are in evil of life, so far as relates to themselves, are *not* truths, for by application to evil, which is of the life, they put off the essence of truth, and put on the nature of the false."—*Ib.*, 8149.

"It is manifest that the truths of faith cannot be acknowledged as truths, that is, the acknowledgment so much talked of cannot exist, except *outwardly* and *in words only*, unless they are implanted in charity; otherwise, inwardly and *in heart* they are denied."—*Ib.*, 2049.

Swedenborg also declares, that "the Church is never predicated of the intellect, but *invariably of the will*—having its ground *solely* in love and charity."—(*A. C.*; 809.) And, as if to warn those, who might read and receive the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, of the great danger to which they would be exposed on account of their *knowing* so much and so exalted truth, he says, that "those who *know what is true*, are many of them in hell."—(*Ib.*, 896.) If this be so, then the abundant knowledge of heavenly truth possessed by us Swedenborgians, is no sure evidence that we are nearer the mansions of the blessed, than other people who are destitute of these knowledges. If our inner life—our heart's affections—be in accordance with the doctrines of heaven we profess, then these truths *are truths* with us; otherwise they are *falses;* for "truths are with every man according to his affections."

I might multiply, indefinitely, extracts of the character of those above cited. But it is unnecessary to add more by way of confirming the general postulate, that a man is really in the Kingdom or out of it—*in* truth or *in* falsity—according as he is internally in

good or evil, and nor according to his lip-profession of true or false doctrine, nor according to his merely external church relations. Nothing is taught us more plainly in the heavenly doctrines, than this: that a man may make a lip-profession of the truth, yet not be *really* in the reception of the truth: that he may belong to that outward and visible body of people which men *call* the Church—and which *is* the visible and nominal Church—yet *not* belong to the invisible, true, and living Church of Christ—the New Jerusalem. And so, too, it is equally plain from the same heavenly doctrines, that a man may be in the outward acknowledgment or lip-profession of great falsities, and yet not be really *in* those falsities; and he may be externally connected with a visible body of people who are in the same falsities, and therefore supposed to be *no* church—supposed to be forsaken of the Lord, and spiritually dead—and yet he may really and internally belong to the true and invisible Church of Christ;—may, in reality, be much nearer to the New Jerusalem, than many who understand and externally acknowledge all the doctrines of heaven.

Although few things are more plainly taught in the heavenly doctrines than this, yet few seem to have been more strangely or generally overlooked by the receivers of these doctrines. And until the truth on this subject comes to be generally seen and acknowledged, we shall continue, I fear, as we have hitherto been going, in the old beaten track of the

previous churches, who have separated from each other solely on the ground of a difference in doctrinals. But since the herald of the New Jerusalem assures us, in language most clear and explicit, that "*doctrinals* do not serve to distinguish churches before the Lord," therefore we should not allow the mere external reception and acknowledgment of doctrinals, of either one sort or another, to distinguish persons as *in* or *out* of the true church of the Lord. Or, if *we do* allow this, we may be sure that in so doing we are not exemplifying the heavenly spirit or catholic teachings of the New Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XII.

UNITARIANS MAY, AT HEART, ACKNOWLEDGE THE DIVINE HUMANITY.

Perhaps there is no class of professing Christians, who are generally considered by nominal New Churchmen as standing so poor a chance for the kingdom of heaven, as Unitarians. No matter how pure and elevated a man's character, no matter how earnest, righteous, and holy his life; if he is called, or calls himself, a Unitarian, that, with a very large number—perhaps a large majority—of Swedenborgians, is thought sufficient to seal his condemnation. Point to his righteous and holy living, and they will answer: "Mere external righteousness." Speak of his noble generosity, his unswerving integrity, his inflexible adherence to principle, his obvious desire to be led of the Lord in all things, his apparent delight in the performance of good uses, and they will hint at the selfish love of reputation that underlies all this fair outward appearance. Talk of his forbearance, his humility, his gentleness, his charity, or other eminent Christian graces, and they will say: "O yes, an abundance of paint and varnish—mere natural good, that is all." He may be a good hus-

band, a good father, a good neighbor, a good citizen, they will tell you; but he cannot be a Christian. He cannot, they think, belong to the kingdom or church of Christ. And the reason, they allege, is, because he does not acknowledge the Divine Humanity. He rejects or does not accept the doctrine of the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ. And then they will refer you to what Swedenborg says of the sad condition of Arians and Socinians in the other world, who, because they deny the Divine of the Lord, "are out of heaven and cannot be received by any angelic society."—(*Ap. Ex.*, 778.) And instantly they jump to the conclusion, that all who profess or call themselves Unitarians, *do* deny the Divine of the Lord, and therefore cannot enter heaven.

Such is the prejudice against Unitarians, which this class of nominal New Churchmen have succeeded in implanting in many minds, particularly of the younger members of our Church, that these latter would, I doubt not, consider it exceeding sinful to attend a Unitarian church, even for a single Sabbath. They would, probably, suffer as severe self-reproach for such an act, as would many ignorant but pious members of the Church of Rome, for listening to a Protestant sermon, or reading a Protestant Bible or prayer-book. And whenever any of this class of Swedenborgians incline to heap odium upon one of their more liberal brethren—to damage his Christian reputation—to impress others with the idea of his

peculiar unsoundness in the faith, and his peculiar unfitness, therefore, for association with New Churchmen, they have only to hint that he is "more than half Unitarian," or that he "fraternizes with Unitarians," or "is friendly to that denomination," and the work is accomplished. He is thenceforward a suspected, if not a virtually excommunicated, individual.

My purpose now is, to show that all this is as contrary to the catholic teachings of the New Church, as it is to the sweet and genial and all-embracing love of heaven.

Swedenborg does, it is true, teach that the doctrine of the Divine Humanity is fundamental in the New Jerusalem. He insists on the supreme importance of acknowledging the Divinity of Jesus Christ —the Divine in the human—the Father in the Son. He says, "there are two principal things which constitute the Church, viz.: to acknowledge the Divinity of the Lord in His Humanity, and to apply truths from the Word to life."—(*A. E.*, 209.) And in many places he speaks of the Divine Humanity as a fundamental doctrine of heaven, and of the reception and acknowledgment of this doctrine as essential to all heavenly or truly Christian life. He does say, too, that those who deny the Divine of the Lord, as Socinians and Arians, "are out of heaven and cannot be received by any angelic society."

But are all nominal Unitarians, then, to be reck-

oned as outcasts? Are they to be shut out of the Kingdom *because they are Unitarians*, or because they do not openly acknowledge the Divine Humanity? Is this Unitarian heresy so dreadful that it cannot be pardoned?—or that all who live and die in the professed belief of it must needs be damned? *Is* this the teaching of Swedenborg? If so, it is in direct contradiction to much that he has elsewhere taught on the subject of mere doctrine. For he not only tells us that true doctrine does not save a man, nor false doctrine condemn him; but he declares that a person "may be regenerated by means of *any doctrine whatsoever*" (*A. C.*, 6765); and that "*in every one* of them [i. e., of the doctrines professed by Christians, no matter how heretical] salvation is attainable."—(*Ib.*, 3993.) And not only does this narrow and sectarian view array Swedenborg against himself, but it is equally opposed to reason and common sense, and to the conclusion irresistibly forced upon us by innumerable facts and the observation of Christian character. "By their fruits ye shall know them," saith the Lord. When, therefore, we contemplate the fruitful and noble lives of such men as Channing, and Greenwood, and Follen, and Tuckerman, and the elder and younger Ware, and a host of others professing the same or similar faith—nominal Unitarians, all of them—we are forced to conclude, either that Swedenborgians greatly misapprehend the writer whom they profess to honor, or that Swedenborg

himself was mistaken in regard to what he taught about Arians and Socinians. But we shall find in this, as in all other instances, that the error is not with Swedenborg, but with Swedenborgians. It is not the teaching of the Seer that is in fault, but the understanding of those who assume to be his interpreters. See if it be not so.

Swedenborg says "that a saving faith is a faith directed toward the Lord God, the Saviour Jesus Christ."—(*T. C. R.*, 342.) And the faith of Unitarians, it is alleged, is *not* so directed, and therefore cannot be "*saving* faith." "But what is the first requisite of a faith directed toward Jesus Christ?" This is the very question which Swedenborg himself imagines some one to ask, and we have the reply in his own words: "I answer, it is an ACKNOWLEDGMENT THAT HE IS THE SON OF GOD." And again in the same paragraph, he says, "that every one who desires to be a true Christian ought to believe that JESUS IS THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." Now, does not every Unitarian believe this? Then he has "a saving faith," has he not?—"a faith directed toward the Lord Jesus Christ." He acknowledges Him to be "the Son of the living God." Then, so far as the mere matter of *belief* is concerned, he has all that is necessary to make him "a true Christian," according to the great Seer's own express declaration.

But Swedenborg, it is said, also teaches that the acknowledgment and worship of the Lord in His

Divine Humanity, is essential to a truly Christian life; and that no one can be a true Christian who is not in such acknowledgment and worship. And this also is true. But here again we are liable to be deceived, and many *are* deceived, by appearances—misled by mere lip-profession. We are too apt to think that all who *profess* to believe in and worship the Divine Humanity, really do so; and that all who make no such profession, deny and reject that Humanity. But we of the New Church ought not to be so beguiled and ensnared by appearances. We, of all others, *ought* to rise above the fallacies of the senses into the purer realm of realities. We ought to know that the worship of the heart, which is the *essential* thing, may be, and often is, very different from that of the lips; that, while the acknowledgment and worship of the latter may be according to the truth, that of the former may be far from the truth—and *vice versa*. It does not follow that a man who worships the Lord with the lips, therefore, *really* worships Him; nor, that he who offers no external and formal worship, does *not* worship Him *in reality*. So a man may talk much about the Divine Humanity, and be earnest in his professions of love and reverence, who knows nothing of the Divine Humanity in his heart. The remark is often made, that, when a person has much religion *to speak of*, it is almost certain that he has but very little of the right sort. So, may not a man who really knows but little or nothing of the

Divine Humanity—who has, I mean, but little *heart*-knowledge of it—endeavor to make up for his deficiency, or perchance to conceal it, by excessive *talk about* it? And, on the other hand, may not a person who never talks at all about the Divine Humanity—who has seldom, if ever, heard the expression—be, nevertheless, a sincere worshipper of that Humanity? It is *not* with the lips, but *with the heart*, that the Divine Humanity is truly acknowledged and worshipped. "To act according to the precepts of the Lord," says Swedenborg, "*is truly the worship* of Him." And "the *real* worship of the Lord consists in the performance of uses."

It is possible, then, for a person to be in the real *heart* acknowledgment of the Divine Humanity, who is in no such formal or lip acknowledgment. This is the undeniable teaching of the New Church on the subject. None who are inwardly evil, do truly or really acknowledge the Divine Humanity, whatever they may profess; while all who are in the life of charity, and thus are inwardly good, are in the *real*, though they may not be in the *formal* acknowledgment of this central doctrine. Accordingly, Swedenborg, speaking of "the Lord's Divine Human," says: "This is denied *in heart* by all who are in the life of evil, that is, by all those who despise others in comparison with themselves, who bear hatred toward all who do not pay them due respect," &c. "Hence it is evident," he continues, "that they who are in the life

of evil cannot acknowledge the Lord [i. e., not *really*, not *with the heart*] but form to themselves innumerable contradictions against Him, inasmuch as they are receptive of an influx of fantasies from hell; whereas, they who are *in the life of good*, acknowledge the Lord [in His Divine Human—for it is the Lord's Divine Human of which our author is here speaking] nasmuch as they are under the influx of heaven, the principle whereof is love and charity."—(*A. C.*, 2354.) Here we are clearly taught that all who live a good, righteous life, do *really* acknowledge the Lord's Divine Human; while all who are in the life of evil, however they may acknowledge it *with their lips*, do not acknowledge it *in reality*.

Again, speaking of the Lord's Divine Human, Swedenborg says: "This principle, also, they distinguish within themselves, who contend in favor of faith alone, and do not live the life of faith; for they believe that the Lord's Human principle is purely human, not unlike the human principle of another man; whence, also, several of them deny the Lord's Divine principle, *however they profess it with the mouth.* But they who *live the life of faith* [as many do who profess faith alone], adore the Lord with bended knees and humble hearts as God the Saviour, thinking nothing at the time *from doctrine* concerning the distinction between the Divine and the human natures; in like manner in the Holy Supper; hence it is evident that with these the Lord's Divine Human *is in their hearts*."—*A. C.*, 4724.

In this passage we are taught that some really deny the Divinity of the Lord, who nevertheless "profess it with the mouth;" while others, who live the life of faith, though professing doctrines that are false, and neither knowing nor thinking anything about the Divine Humanity, are really in the acknowledgment and reception of that Humanity. They have the very spirit and life of the doctrine within them; for "the Lord's Divine Human is in their hearts."

Again: all who are internally conjoined to the Lord, must needs be members of His true Church—yes, members of the New Jerusalem—no matter what their outward Church relations may be. And Swedenborg says that this conjunction takes place, "with the simple in faith and in heart," *before* there is any open and formal acknowledgment of the Divine Humanity. "Before the Lord's Humanity is acknowledged [i. e. externally and formally] to be Divine, there is indeed *a marriage of the Lord with the Church*, but only among those who approach the Lord and think of his Divinity, and *not at all whether His Humanity be divine or not;* thus the simple in faith and in heart do, but men of learning and erudition do so but seldom."—(*A. R.*, 812.) There may, then, among simple-hearted people, be an internal conjunction with the Lord, before there is any conscious or formal acknowledgment of the Divine Humanity, or before there is any thought as to

"whether His Humanity be Divine or not." And no one can doubt that all in whom such conjunction takes place, are members of the true church of Christ, be their doctrinal professions or their external Church relations what they may.

And since there may be persons who are professedly or nominally in the rejection of the great central doctrine of the New Jerusalem, and yet in reality or *at heart* in the reception and acknowledgment of this doctrine, so on the other hand, there may be those who openly profess and accept it, but who at heart deny and reject it. Members of the nominal New Church, if they do not shun evils as sins, nor live according to the divine precepts, do internally and really reject the doctrine of the Divine Humanity. Their worship of the Divine Human is the worship of a mere man—nothing more. It is, therefore, as truly idolatrous, as was the worship of Jehovah among the Jews. And speaking of that people, Swedenborg says: "If any worshipped Jehovah, it was only on account of his being *called* Jehovah, and thus being distinguished by *name* from the gods of other nations; thus their worship even in this respect, was idolatrous; for the worship of a name alone, supposing it to be even the name of Jehovah, is nothing else but mere idolatry. The case is the same with those who call themselves Christians, and say they worship Christ, and yet *do not live according to His precepts.* All such worship Him with idola-

trous worship, because they worship His name alone; for it is a false Christ whom they worship, concerning which false Christ, see Matt. xxiv. 23, 24, n. 3010."—(*A. C.* 3732.)

How plain is it from this, that we of the nominal New Church, while extolling the Divine Humanity with our lips, may be offering to that Humanity, after all, merely an idolatrous worship! How certain it is that our worship *is* idolatrous, if we are not, from day to day, and hour to hour, earnestly striving to live according to the divine precepts!

It is not, then, a mere name, or a mere profession of faith, that is to save or condemn us. We may bear the name of New Churchmen, and profess the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, and yet have our final abode in the dismal realms below. Or we may name ourselves Unitarians or Trinitarians, Protestants or Catholics, and profess the doctrines commonly held by these classes of Christians respectively, yet live so near the Lord, and listen so reverently to every whisper of His Spirit, that our final dwelling place shall be among the white-robed armies above. We may acknowledge and worship the Divine Humanity with our lips, yet deny and reject that Humanity in our hearts. Or, we may profess the doctrine commonly known as Unitarian, yet be in the life of heavenly charity—be, *at heart*, in the acknowledgment and worship of the Divine Humanity.

The same broad and beautiful catholicity as ever! —Yet without the abrogation of a single Christian precept, or the relaxation of a single gospel requirement. It is the catholicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ,—a Gospel whose beneficence is limited far less by the errors of the head, than by the perversity, stubbornness, and disobedience of the heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

DIVERSITY IN THE NEW JERUSALEM.

It may be objected to the foregoing chapters, that, if what is herein taught be true, then the New Church must include not only a vast multitude, but quite a *mixed* multitude. It must include people of every variety of religious belief—Catholics as well as Protestants. And what sort of a *New* Church, I am asked, is that which embraces within its pale a multitude of acknowledged errorists?—yea, a multitude who acknowledge for truth the very errors which brought the former Church into such a state of darkness and desolation? Can this be the New Jerusalem of which we read, whose light, we are told, is "like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal"?

Let me first remind the objector, that the New Church, whose catholicity I have aimed to vindicate, is the Church whereof Swedenborg is the acknowledged herald and exponent. The more pertinent question, therefore, for a New Churchman to ask, would be, Whether I have gone beyond Swedenborg in my inculcations of catholicity; or whether I have taught anything on this subject, which has not been

shown to be fully justified by his teachings. If not, then surely there can be no valid ground of objection to these chapters, with those who acknowledge Swedenborg for an authority in the premises. But if I have, then are my teachings fairly open to criticism from professed New Churchmen.

But as to the multitude of people and the diversity of belief in this New Church, according to the views of catholicity that have been presented, I grant that our objector's inference is quite correct. And I maintain that there *are* a great multitude of people and a wide diversity of doctrine, if we are to judge by their creeds or outward profession, in the Church of the New Jerusalem. But wide as is the diversity in their creeds, and much as they may differ outwardly in their doctrinal beliefs, they are nevertheless united inwardly. They are one at heart; one in the spirit and temper of their minds; one in the Lord Jesus Christ; one in their supreme love of Him, and their steadfast purpose to keep His commandments. However diverse religious creeds and outward church relations may separate them externally, they enjoy an internal and spiritual communion, and to the eye of the All-seeing One, are all members of the self-same Church; for they are all united to Christ their living Head, and at heart are all true worshippers of Him. They constitute "the communion of saints," or the Lord's true Church on earth—outwardly divided, but inwardly united—diverse in doctrine, but

one in spirit. That this is the plain teaching of the herald of the New Jerusalem, is clear beyond a doubt. Let us see if it be nct

In the *True Christian Religion*, n. 307, Swedenborg quotes three passages from the Apocalypse, in each of which the New Jerusalem is spoken of or referred to as the Lamb's wife. Then, after telling us that "the New Jerusalem means a New Church which is at this day establishing by the Lord," he immediately adds: "This Church, and not the former, is the wife and mother in this sense." In what sense? Why, in the sense that he had just before explained. In the sense in which he declares it to mean "the communion of saints, in other words, the Lord's Church dispersed throughout the whole world." The New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, then, according to this high authority, is "the communion of saints" —all God's people here below, of whatever name or creed—"His church dispersed throughout the whole world." And in the same work (n. 417), we are told that this "communion of saints" is the same as "the Lord's Kingdom," which "is our neighbor that ought to be loved in the highest degree." And if we inquire who those are that constitute "the Lord's Kingdom," our author's answer is at hand; "for His Kingdom consists of all who are influenced by good" (N. J. D., 95); in other words, of all who believe in the Lord and live in charity toward the neighbor. In another part of his writings, where the

author speaks of this broad church, or "communion," and declares it to be identical with "the Lord's Kingdom in the earth," he tells us of whom it consists. "They are scattered," he says, "through the whole world, and consist of those who are in love to the Lord, and in charity toward the neighbor."—*A. C.*, 7396.

Then, if we turn to that chapter of the Divine Word (Rev. xxi.) in which the descent of the New Jerusalem from God out of heaven is spoken of,—the very chapter of all others, from which we should expect to learn the distinguishing characteristics of the New Church, as well as who they are that compose it, we find much in harmony and nothing in conflict with what has just been said. Thus we are told in the last verse of this chapter, what class of people will constitute the Church of the New Jerusalem; in other words, who shall and who shall not enter into the Holy City. None shall enter in, it is declared, "but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life"—clearly implying that all who *are* written in this book, will enter in, and together will constitute the Holy Jerusalem, the city of the Most High. Now, who are they who are "written in the Lamb's book of life?" Swedenborg, in his exposition of the meaning of this text, answers: "They who believe in the Lord and live according to His commandments in the Word."—(*A. R.*, 925.) And immediately he refers to A. R., 874, where, in explaining a text of

kindred purport, he says: "No others are found written in the Book of Life, than such as have lived according to the Lord's commandments in the Word, and have believed in the Lord;" the plain import of which is, that all who have so believed and lived, *are* found written in this Book

Now, will any one have the presumption to maintain, that only those who have read and accepted the revelations made through Swedenborg, and who are therefore popularly known as Swedenborgians, "believe in the Lord and live according to His commandments in the Word?"—that Swedenborgians *alone* belong to "the Kingdom of the Lord?"—that they *alone* constitute "the communion of saints?"—that they *alone* are what Swedenborg means by "the Lord's Church dispersed throughout the whole world?" — that they *alone* "are influenced by good?"—that they *alone* "are in love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor?" I am aware that this has been substantially and repeatedly affirmed. I am aware that much of our present New Church ecclesiasticism is based upon such affirmation, and could not logically abide a moment without it. Yet I doubt if there be many to-day, even among the most bigoted and exclusive of our brethren, who would have the presumption to answer the above questions in the affirmative. But they *must all* be answered affirmatively, else the very first sentence in an important article from the pen of Sampson Reed,

in the *New American Cyclopædia*, is not true. The sentence in the article referred to, defines the "New Jerusalem Church," to be "a religious body which holds the doctrines set forth in the theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg." This body is what is popularly known as the Swedenborgian body. None but Swedenborgians can be understood as included in it. Indeed, I cannot suppose that the writer himself meant to include any others. And if our Swedenborgian body alone constitutes the "New Jerusalem Church," then I submit—since this is now the only Church upon earth, that can be, or is, in conjunction with the Lord—that an affirmative answer to each and all of the above questions must follow by strict logical sequence. For if Swedenborgians alone are in conjunction with the Lord—if they are indeed "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," to the exclusion of all others, then they alone are the Lord's Kingdom on earth, and alone constitute "the communion of saints." But the New Jerusalem Church, if Swedenborg has taken its just gauge and dimensions, is by no means so contracted as the author of the article referred to seems to imagine. It is vastly wider in extent. It is far more varied and comprehensive in its character, as I have already shown, and proceed still farther to show.

We have seen that, according to Swedenborg, the New Church, which he says is the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, is "the Kingdom of the Lord" on

earth, or "His Church dispersed throughout the whole world." And this kingdom or church, we are told, consists of *all* "who are in love to the Lord and in charity toward the neighbor," whatever be their denomination, profession, or outward Church relations.—(*A. C.*, 7396.) And this, it is plain, is identically the same class of persons referred to in A. R., 925—"They who believe in the Lord and live according to His commandments in the Word"—and of whom it is said the New Jerusalem consists.

Turn, now, to Swedenborg's exposition of the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse. The first part of this chapter gives the number of those that were "sealed" out of each of the tribes of the children of Israel. And these twelve tribes, we are told, signify, "those who are in genuine goods and truths" (*A. E.*, 452), and who, therefore, constitute "the Lord's internal Church."—(*A. R.*, 363.) In other words, they are "all of the New Christian Heaven and the New Church, who will be in truths of doctrine, derived from the good of love through the Word from the Lord."—(*A. R.*, 348.) These form the *internal* of the New Church. But this Church, like every other, must have an *external* as well as an *internal*. And the external is just as much a part of the Church, and just as essential to its completeness, as the skin is a part of the human body and necessary to its completeness. "Where the internal Church is *the external must be also*, for the internal of the Church

cannot be separated from its external"—(*A. C.*, 6587.) Who, then, constitute the *external* of this New Heaven and New Church? According to Swedenborg, they are that "great multitude which no man could number," and which the Apocalyptic divine "beheld," after he had heard the number that were sealed out of each of the twelve tribes. For in his exposition of this text, our author says that this great multitude "signifies all the rest who are not among the above recited [i. e., the 144,000], and yet are *in the Lord's new Heaven and New Church*, being those who compose the ultimate heaven and the external church."—(*A. R.*, 363.) This, surely, is plain enough. No one who acknowledges Swedenborg as an authority, can deny that this "great multitude" are really *in the New Church*, although they constitute the external of this Church. And what class of people are they? Not those of the nominal New Jerusalem—not the "religious body" known as Swedenborgians, surely; for none of them are in genuine truths. Among their number, we have "all those who are in the good of life according to the doctrinal tenets of their religion," which tenets "*they believe* to be truths and goods," although they are not such; and all "who are in falsities from ignorance, and from various religions," but who nevertheless "live well, according to the dogmas of their religion;" "for what is false is not imputed to any one who lives well according to the dogmas of his religion."—*A. E.*, 454, 455.

Here it is conceded by an authority to which all New Churchmen profess their readiness to yield, that people may be in falses from ignorance, or falses from instruction received from those whose opinions they venerate, and yet be "in the good of life." And such are declared by the same excellent authority to be "in the Lord's New Church," and to be "numerous" (*A. C.*, 658,)—"a great multitude which no man could number." And where are they? Not in our Swedenborgian organization, surely. Not in that "religious body" which the *New American Cyclopædia* calls "the New Jerusalem Church." By no means. They are scattered among the various sects, where more or less of falsities and of "truths not genuine" are held and taught.

In perfect harmony with the foregoing, is Swedenborg's explanation of the meaning of "the seven candlesticks" mentioned in the first chapter of the Apocalypse, and which are there said to be "the seven churches." He at first says that these seven candlesticks "signify the New Church upon earth, which is the New Jerusalem, descending from the Lord out of the New Heaven." Then, after referring to previous numbers wherein he had explained the meaning of "candlesticks," and the number "seven," he proceeds:

"By the seven candlesticks are not understood seven Churches, but the entire Church in the aggregate, which in itself is one, but *various* according to

reception. Those varieties may be compared to the various jewels in the crown of a king; and they may also be compared to the various members and organs in a perfect body, which yet make a one. The perfection of every form consists in various things being suitably disposed in their order; hence it is that the universal New Church is described as to its various particulars, in what follows."—*A. R.*, 66.

From this we learn that there is great *variety* in the New Church, and that this variety, instead of diminishing, actually enhances its perfection. We also learn that the New Church, "in the aggregate," or in its entireness, is described as to its various particulars, in what is said of the seven Churches in Asia And if we look at the faith of these "seven Churches" as revealed in the spiritual sense of what is addressed to them, we shall find there all the dominant forms of religious error which have ever had currency in Christendom. We shall find in these churches some, "who primarily respect truths of doctrine and not good of life;" some, "who are in good as to life, but in falses as to doctrine;" some, "who place the all of the Church in good works, and not anything in truths of doctrine;" some, "who have suffered themselves to be seduced by others"—who "have not themselves falsified truths," but have given credit to those "who have done so;" some, "who are in dead worship;" and some, "who are in faith separate from charity."—(*A. E.*, 112, 163, 195, 227.) Yet, notwithstanding the errors that had been incorporated

into their creeds, many, in these same churches, are found to live the life of charity, and therefore belong to the Lord's true Church, the New Jerusalem. Thus it is said concerning those who profess the doctrine of "faith alone," that "the *greater part* of those who are born within the churches where the doctrine of faith alone, and of justification thereby is received, . . believe no otherwise than that faith alone is to think concerning God and salvation, and *how they ought to live*;" and that "there are very few who thus *live from doctrine*"—that is, in accordance with the doctrine of faith alone.—*A. E.*, 233.

Such is the breadth and catholicity of the New Jerusalem. Its members are not merely the receivers of the doctrines taught by Swedenborg, but *all* the faithful followers of the Lord Jesus, wherever they are, or whatever their name and creed. All of every church, who love the Lord supremely and the neighbor as themselves—all who have the Master's spirit and labor to do the Master's will, however they may differ in their doctrinal beliefs, are the veritable children of the Heavenly Father. All such constitute "the Lord's Kingdom" on earth—"the communion of saints"—the "one fold" of the good Shepherd—the "church dispersed throughout the whole world"—the New Jerusalem that "lieth four square," and whose temple, and inspiration, and perpetual illumination, are the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GENTILE WORLD.

By the Gentile world I mean the same that is commonly understood by these terms—all peoples who do not recognize the divine authority of the Christian or Jewish Scriptures, and are, therefore, not to be accounted Jews or Christians. They are the entire Mahometan, heathen, and pagan world—embracing about three fourths of the present inhabitants of our globe. It is, and has ever been, a question of peculiar interest to Christians, What is to be the condition of this immense mass of human beings in the great Hereafter? They have not the "sure word of prophecy" that has been vouchsafed to Christians. God has not spoken to them as He has to us, through inspired Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists. They have no knowledge of God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. They know nothing of the Incarnate Word; nothing of the advent, teachings, doings, sufferings, death, and resurrection of the divine Saviour. They are ignorant of the grand and inspiring facts of the gospel—ignorant of the character, many of them even of the name, of Jesus Christ; and, of course, are ignorant of the great redemption wrought by Him.

What, then, is to be the fate of these people in the day of final reckoning? Every hour they are passing into the spiritual world by hundreds and thousands. What is to be their final doom? Will the Great Judge pronounce upon all of them that terrible sentence, "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"? Must all these people have their abode forever in the realms of darkness? If not, what *is* to become of them? Is the New Church as catholic, reasonable, and Scriptural in its teachings on this subject, as we have found it to be on others? We shall see.

The prevalent belief in the Christian Church has been, that the people in Gentile countries, unless converted to the Christian religion, must all be lost. This belief has resulted legitimately—perhaps I may say necessarily—from the theory long prevalent among Christians in regard to the way of salvation. According to this theory, men are justified and saved by faith alone—faith in the merits of Jesus Christ, and in the great Atonement wrought through Him. And since none can be supposed to have this faith who never received the Gospel, and never heard of the divine Saviour, or the way of salvation through Him, therefore, it is argued, all who have not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, must inevitably perish. And in this conclusion many have confirmed themselves from the literal sense of such passages in the Word as represent the Lord as "sore displeased with the heathen," as

purposing to "execute fury upon the heathen," to "pour out His wrath" upon them—to "have all the heathen in derision," &c.

And in permitting this opinion—mistaken though it be—to prevail as extensively as it has in the Christian church, can we not recognize the hand of a wise and merciful Providence? What else but a firm belief in the spiritually lost and ruined condition of the whole heathen world, could have inspired Christians with such zeal in the cause of foreign missions? What else could have awakened and sustained the missionary spirit? What else could have drawn from the pockets of Christians such vast sums as have been expended in missionary enterprises? What else could have kindled that noble spirit of self-sacrifice which thousands of devoted missionaries have displayed, and which has led them to take their lives in their hands, bid adieu to kindred, and home, and friends, and peril all that the world most prizes for the privilege of proclaiming the Gospel among the heathen? What else could have led to such a wide dissemination of the Gospel among pagan nations, or so stimulated the translation of the Bible into all the languages of the earth? Surely the faith of the nominal New Church, had it been the prevailing faith in Christendom for the last hundred years, would hardly have achieved such results. Is it said that the fruits of these missionary enterprises have hitherto been meagre—hardly adequate to the vast

amount of labor and money expended? Even if this were so—which I do not admit—it would by no means follow that a really great work has not been achieved, a work pregnant with stupendous results to be seen in the coming centuries. The seeds of divine truth scattered in heathen lands—the Word of God translated into the various languages of the earth, so that every one can read it in his own vernacular—who can foresee the rich and abundant harvest which may spring from these seeds in future ages! Who knows what a lofty and noble Christian civilization may yet be reared upon the foundations which these patient and devoted servants of Christ have been laying for the last hundred years!

Yet the thought is shocking, that all in heathen lands, who receive not the Gospel, must perish everlastingly. And it is unreasonable as it is shocking. It seems wholly inconsistent with the wisdom and love of God, to suppose that He would permit such myriads of human beings to be born in regions or under circumstances which render their salvation utterly impossible. Surely a wise and good Being can never condemn any one to endless darkness and woe for that which is no fault, and therefore no sin, of his own. It is not the fault of the millions in heathen lands, that they have not the Gospel. And will God punish, for not *believing* the Gospel, those to whom the Gospel has never been presented?—those who have never enjoyed the opportunity of hearing

or reading the Gospel? Will He forever exclude all such from the light of His countenance and the joys of heaven? *Can* He punish one of His creatures for that which is not the creature's fault? Can he punish, for not obeying the truths of Christianity, those who never knew these truths?. Surely not. In dealing with His creatures, God never acts contrary to the principles of eternal justice; for to do so, would be to act contrary to His own nature. There can be no moral guilt without moral transgression. And moral transgression is a conscious and deliberate violation of known moral law. But where there is no law, or where the law is unknown, of course there can be no transgression. Such is the clear testimony of enlightened reason.

And the testimony of Scripture on this subject is entirely accordant with that of reason. For we are assured that some—yes, "a great multitude" of "all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues," have already been admitted to the joys of heaven. The Apocalyptic divine bears witness to this fact. For, after recounting the number of those sealed out of each of the tribes of Israel, he adds: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." And the apostle Peter, after he had been favored with an instructive vision, and after being called upon

to declare what things God had commanded him, began by saying: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in *every nation* he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." From this we may conclude that there are *some* in every nation, who fear God and work righteousness. And all such are accepted of Him. Therefore the Revelator saw a great multitude, of *all* nations, peoples, and tongues, standing before the Throne, and clad in the vestments of heaven.

Then we find, as a matter of fact, some form of religion and worship among all nations, and some moral duties which their religion enjoins. And all the oriental nations have their Sacred Books, in which are found many excellent precepts and wise maxims. Among the Mahometans is the Koran; among the Hindoos, the Vedas; among the Persians, the Zend-Avesta; and among the Chinese, the writings of Confucius. In the Koran are incorporated many of the benignant precepts of our Saviour. Frequent alms-giving is enjoined as an imperative duty; and such inculcations as the following are scattered throughout its pages: "Do unto another, as thou wouldst he should do unto thee." "Deal not unjustly with others, and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly." "He who sells a defective thing, concealing its defect, will provoke the anger of God and the curses of the angels." "Take not advantage of the necessities of another to buy things at a sacri-

fice; rather relieve his indigence." "Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and free the captive if confined unjustly." "Look not scornfully upon thy fellow-man, neither walk the earth with insolence; for God loveth not the arrogant and vainglorious."

In the Vedas of the Hindoos are found such sentiments and inculcations as these: "By one Supreme Ruler is this universe pervaded." "God, who is perfect wisdom and perfect happiness, is the final refuge of the man who has liberally bestowed his wealth, who has been firm in virtue, and who knows and adores the Great One." "Preserve thyself from self-sufficiency, and do not covet property belonging to another." "The way to eternal beatitude is open to him who, without omission, speaketh truth." "If any one assumes the garb of the religious, without doing their works, he is not of the religious. Whatever garments he wears, if his works are pure, he belongs to the order of pure men." "No man can acquire knowledge of the soul, without abstaining from evil acts, and having control over the senses. . . . . But man may obtain knowledge of the soul by contemplation of God." "To those regions where Evil Spirits dwell, and which utter darkness involves, surely go after death all such men as destroy the purity of their own souls."

And among the maxims of Confucius, whose writings form the Sacred Books of the Chinese, are found such as the following: "Not to correct our

faults is to commit new ones." "Be rigid to yourself, and gentle to others." "Fix the thoughts on the duty, practise without ceasing the virtue of humanity, and, if you have leisure, cultivate the arts." "He who knows right principles is not equal to him who loves them; nor is he who loves them equal to him who delights in them." "To know that a thing is right and not to do it, is a weakness." "Teach all, without regard to what class they belong." When one of his disciples begged that he would teach him how to die well, Confucius answered: "You have not yet learned to live well; when you have learned that, you will know how to die well." When on another occasion he was asked what one maxim expressed the conduct proper for a whole life, he replied: "Never do to others what you do not wish them to do to you." And, in one of the Five Volumes called Chu King, there occur such passages as the following:

"The Sovereign Lord of Heaven produced all the nations of the world, and reigns over them. He makes no exception of persons, but esteems virtue alone, loving men only so far as they worship Him sincerely. He hears the prayers of the merciful, but He destroys the wicked. We ought to pray to Him for immortal life."

"Perfection consists in being reunited to the Supreme Unity. The soul was at first luminous; but it was afterward obscured. It should be our earnest endeavor to restore it to its primitive light; and it is

only by destroying all wrong desires, and all self-love, that we can perceive celestial reason. What is called reason is properly an attribute of Tien, the Supreme God. The light which He communicates to men is a participation of this reason. What is called reason in Tien, is virtue in man; and, when reduced to practice, is called justice."

"When thou art in the secret places of thy house, do not say, None sees me; for there is an Intelligent Spirit who seeth all. Tien, the Supreme, pierces into the recesses of the heart, as light penetrates into a dark room. We must endeavor to be in harmony with His light, like a musical instrument perfectly attuned. We must receive from His hand as soon as he opens it. He seeks to enlighten us continually; but, by our disorderly passions, we close the entrance to our souls."

"To think that we have virtue, is to have very little of it. Wisdom consists in being very humble as if we were incapable of anything, yet ardent as if we could do all."

And with such high wisdom do the volumes, which contain the recorded sayings of Confucius, abound. And these Books, regarded as Sacred by the Chinese, are the standard literature of the whole empire—the basis of all their moral and political wisdom. From time immemorial they have been read and studied, and large portions of them committed to memory, by every school-boy of that vast country; and to call in question anything they assert, would be deemed an alarming heresy.

Now, is it reasonable to suppose that the people,

who hold in reverence such works as the Koran, the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, or the books of Confucius —who regard them as sacred, and consider it a religious obligation to obey their teachings, will all perish everlastingly, because they have not the gospel of Jesus Christ? Is this an enlightened, elevated, or Christian view of the subject? Is it not far more reasonable to believe that the books, which they regard as Sacred, have been mercifully provided of the Lord as a means of their salvation? And if they live according to the truth which these books contain, and which they accept, why should they not go to heaven? They may not—doubtless they will not—go to the *same* heaven as Christians; but may they not have a heaven of their own, just as they now have a country of their own, a government of their own, and a religion of their own different from that of Christians? Swedenborg assures us that they have; that the Lord has mercifully provided a medium of salvation for all peoples and nations, and thereby rendered it possible for all to be finally brought into a heavenly state, and therefore into some heavenly society. He says:

"Since every one, of every religion, is acquainted with the evils, and from evils with falses, which ought to be shunned, and while he shuns them is acquainted with the goods which ought to be done, and with the truths which ought to be believed, it is evident that this is provided of the Lord as a universal

medium of salvation with every nation which has any religion. This is given with all fullness among Christians; and it is likewise given, although not in fullness, among Mahometans, and also among Gentiles."—*A. E.*, 1180.

"It is a very common thing with those who have conceived an opinion respecting any truth of faith, to judge of others that they cannot be saved but by believing as they do, which nevertheless the Lord forbids. (Matt. vii. 1, 2.) Accordingly it hath been made known to me by much experience, that persons of every religion are saved, if so be, by a life of charity, they have received remains of good and of apparent truth." And "more are saved from among Gentiles than from among Christians; for such of the Gentiles as have thought well of their neighbor, and lived in good will to Him, receive the truths of faith in another life better than they who are called Christians, and acknowledge the Lord more gladly than Christians do; for nothing is more delightful and happy to the angels than to instruct those who come from the earth into another life."—*A. C.*, 2284.

Again: after telling us that every man, "whatsoever be his religion," may be saved, because every one is acquainted with evils that are to be shunned, and with goods that ought to be done, he adds:

"A Mahometan sees from the Alkoran that God is one, that the Lord is the Son of God, that there is a heaven and a hell, that there is a life after death, and that the evils mentioned in the precepts of the Decalogue ought to be shunned; if he doeth these things, he also believeth them, and is saved. A Gentile sees from his religious principle that there is a God, that

He is to be sanctified and worshipped, that good is from Him, that there is a heaven and a hell, that there is a life after death, and that the evils mentioned in the Decalogue ought to be shunned: if he doeth these things, and believeth them, he is saved. And whereas several of the Gentiles perceive God as a man, and God-man is the Lord, therefore also after death, when they are instructed by the angels, they acknowledge the Lord, and from the Lord afterward receive truths which they did not know before."—*A. E.*, 1180.

"Among the Gentiles who are out of the Church [i. e. out of Christendom], there is likewise a church of the Lord; and although they are in false principles, still, such as live a life of charity are saved."—*A. C.*, 3093. See also 4190, 4211, 1032, 2589, 2863.

Such is the abounding love and mercy of the Lord. And such, too, is the rational, Scriptural, and eminently catholic teaching of the New Church concerning the Gentile world. It reveals the benignity of our Father in the heavens, and His tender love and gracious care for all His children. And, although the Gentiles have not the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the great redemption wrought by Him that has been vouchsafed to Christians, nevertheless it is He and He alone who enlightens their understanding and imparts to them whatever of saving health, and joy, and peace their souls receive. So that even those in Gentile nations, who are saved, are saved by Christ; and without Him their condition would be as helpless and hopeless as our own.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE NEW CHURCH IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF THE GOSPEL.

THUS far it has been my purpose to show that the New Jerusalem Church is a truly catholic Church. It is no mere sect, distinguished primarily by its doctrines, like the various other sects in Christendom. It has none of the narrow and hurtful spirit of sect. It is broad as the kingdom of heaven. It *is* Christ's kingdom on earth, composed of all His meek, patient, humble, and obedient children—all who have been baptized with His baptism, and had their hearts imbued with His loving spirit. Its members are not confined to any particular sect, but are scattered throughout all the sects; for among them all are to be found some sincere and humble followers of the Lord Jesus; some who fulfil the requirements of those two primary precepts of our religion, which require us to love the Lord with all the heart and our neighbor as ourselves. Among the members of this Church—while they all agree in fundamentals—there exists great diversity, both in doctrine and ritual. But this diversity rather increases than diminishes its perfection. Such is the case with

the Lord's kingdom in heaven. Why, then, should it not be so with His kingdom or church on earth? That there is in the church a like variety as in heaven, is often and explicitly taught by Swedenborg. To quote a single passage:

"Heaven also exists wherever the Lord is acknowledged, believed in, and loved. Variety of worship arising from variety of good in different societies is not detrimental, but advantageous; for the perfection of heaven results from that variety. . . The same may be said concerning the church as concerning heaven, for the church is the Lord's heaven upon earth. The church also consists of many [societies], and yet each is called a church, and likewise *is* a church, so far as the good of love and faith rules in it. Here also the Lord makes unity from variety, thus from several churches makes one church."—*H. H.*, 56, 57.

And in a marginal note to this passage, the author says, "that if good [or charity] were the characteristic and essential of the church, and not truth without good, the church would be a one;" and then he refers to the following numbers in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, 1285, 1316, 2982, 3241, 3267, 3445, 3451, 3452. These numbers are all exceedingly interesting, and will amply repay a careful perusal. In one of them the author speaks of the ancient churches, and says there was "a difference between them, *as at this day*, in regard to doctrinals; but still they made one in this, that they acknowledged love toward the Lord

and charity toward their neighbor as the principal and very essential constituents of a church." And immediately he adds: "When this is the case, that love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor are made essentials with all and each individual, then churches, how many soever they may be [and how diverse soever as to doctrinals] make one, and each is then one in the kingdom of the Lord."—(2982.) In another of these numbers allusion is made to the then existing variety of doctrinals in the different churches in Christendom, and it is added: "But notwithstanding there are so many varieties and differences of doctrinals . . . still they form together *one* church, when all acknowledge charity as the essential of the church: or, what is the same thing, when they have respect to *life* as the end of doctrine, that is, when they inquire how a man of the church *lives*, and not so much what are his sentiments."—(3241.) In another, where the Lord's spiritual church "dispersed over the whole globe" is spoken of, and is said to be "everywhere various, according to articles of belief or truths of faith," it is added: "The Lord's spiritual kingdom itself in the heavens is also thus circumstanced, viz.: it is various according to what appertains to faith, insomuch that there is not one society, nor even one in a society, who, in those things which relate to the truth of faith, is entirely agreed with others as to his ideas. Nevertheless the Lord's spiritual kingdom in the heavens is one; the

reason is, because all account charity principal."—(3267.) In another, it is said: "The essential doctrine, derived from the literal sense of the Word, is one only, viz., the doctrine of charity and of love, of charity toward our neighbor and of love to the Lord; for this doctrine and a life according to it is the whole Word, as the Lord teaches in Matthew, chap. xxii. 35, 36, 37, 38."—(3445.) In another: "The doctrine is one, when all are principled in mutual love and charity. Mutual love and charity are effective of unity, or oneness, even among varieties, uniting varieties into one; for let numbers be multiplied ever so much, even to thousands and ten thousands, if they are all principled in charity or mutual love, they have all one end, viz., the common good, the kingdom of the Lord, and the Lord himself; in which case the varieties in matters of doctrine and worship are like the varieties of the senses and viscera in man, which contribute to the perfection of the whole."—(1285.) In still another, it is said: "With respect to the Lord's church, the case is this: that, whereas it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, it must needs be various and diverse as to those doctrinals, viz.: one society will profess one thing to be a truth of faith, because it is so said in the Word, another society will profess another thing for the same reason. Consequently the church of the Lord, inasmuch as it derives its doctrinals from the literal sense of the Word, will differ in

every different place, and this not only according to societies in general, but sometimes according to particular persons in each society. Nevertheless, a difference in doctrinals of faith is no reason why the church should not be one, provided only there be unanimity as to willing what is good and doing what is good."—(3451.) Then, after citing some examples to show how a person who is in error as to doctrine, may still have "the Lord's church or kingdom in him," he refers, at the close of the paragraph, to no less than *twenty-three* other numbers in the *Arcana*, where may be found a further elucidation of such propositions as these: "That charity, and not doctrinal tenets, constitutes the church."—"That the church is various as to truths, but is made one by charity."—"That there is but one single doctrine, viz., that of love to the Lord and of charity toward our neighbor."—"That the church would be one if all had charity, notwithstanding they differed as to worship and doctrinals."—"That the church would be as the Lord's kingdom in the heavens, if all had charity."

Such and so broad is the Church of the New Jerusalem! So inclusive in its character, so catholic in its teachings! So much and so emphatically does it exalt charity above faith—life above doctrine! In point of catholicity, it stands in striking and beautiful contrast to other churches that have preceded it. Its catholicity is identical with that of the Gospel of

Jesus Christ. For the Gospel nowhere demands an intellectual assent to a system of doctrines. It nowhere makes *belief*—save in the Lord Jesus himself—a test of Christian discipleship. Its two great commandments —those which contain the substance of all the rest—those on which it is said, "hang all the law and the prophets"—are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thy neighbor as thyself;" and it is added: "There is none other commandment greater than these." And the prince of apostles declares that "love is the fulfilling of the law;" and pronounces charity "the greatest" among Christian graces, adding also: "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." The promises of the Gospel are not to those who *believe* this or that doctrine, but to those whose *hearts* are right in the sight of God. Its blessing is pronounced upon the meek, the merciful, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, the earnest seekers after righteousness—graces all pertaining to the will of man more than to the intellect. And the uniform teaching of the Saviour himself is, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth* the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and *doeth* them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock." "Ye are my friends if ye *do* whatsoever I command you." "He that hath my com-

mandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." "My mother and my brethren are those who hear the Word of God, and do it." "If ye *keep my commandments* ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love." "This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you." "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." "If ye love me, *keep my commandments*, and I will pray my Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." "The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." "They that *have done good*, shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; and they that *have done evil*, unto the resurrection of damnation." "And, behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according *as his work shall be*." "Blessed are they that *do His commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Such is the catholicity of the gospel of Christ. Such the test of Christian discipleship. Such

the sum and substance of our holy religion, according to the testimony of the Master himself. It is not mere *belief* in any system of doctrines however grand or beautiful. It is something more and higher than this. It is following after Christ. It is hearing and doing His precepts. It is losing our life for His sake. It is bearing much fruit. It is keeping His commandments, and thereby entering into His love—opening our hearts to the healing and comforting influences of His spirit—learning to love one another as He loves us. And this, it is plain, may be done—we cannot doubt that it is done—by thousands and tens of thousands who have God's holy Word, but never read one page of Swedenborg.

And this beautiful catholicity of the Gospel, is seen to be identical with that of the New Jerusalem as unfolded in these pages; for the spirit of the New Jerusalem is the spirit of the Gospel—the spirit of the Lord Jesus himself. And this spirit does not in the least detract from the beauty or worth of the highest truths. It does not tend to the undervaluing of the sublime and precious verities of the New Jerusalem. On the contrary it renders its truths doubly dear and attractive—precisely as a beautiful woman becomes far more beautiful and interesting when she is seen to possess those tender, liberal, and humane feelings, which incite to broad and generous charities;—which prompt her to seek out the poor, the ignorant,

the sick and the sorrowing, and extend a sympathetic and helping hand to the lowly children of toil and want. So the large and catholic spirit of the New Church gives new and additional lustre to its beautiful and sublime truths. It is, and must ever remain, one of their highest recommendations to all generous and liberal minds; for such minds instinctively recognize in this spirit something akin to the Lord and heaven. In exhibiting the catholicity of the New Jerusalem, therefore, I feel that I am demonstrating to some extent its heavenly origin, and kindling a desire to know more of its exalted and precious truths. The best minds are always offended and repelled by bigotry, while they are as uniformly conciliated and attracted by genuine catholicity. Let it be seriously proclaimed as the doctrine or belief of any sect that *its* members alone are Christians—that they alone constitute Christ's kingdom on earth--and thoughtful people will hardly care to inquire further into the beliefs of such sect. Nay, they will turn away from it with loathing and disgust.

I repeat, then, that the catholicity of the New Jerusalem church is the catholicity of the gospel of Christ:—that this church rejects none whom Christ accepts, disowns none whom He owns, unchurches none whom He fellowships. On the contrary, she throws her arms lovingly around all His humble followers of every name, acknowledges as bone of her

bone and flesh of her flesh all who acknowledge and serve Him; and like a true mother, "the Lamb's wife," fondly cherishes as her own children all who have "the Father's name written in their foreheads."

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

THE careful reader cannot fail to have discovered the important conclusion to which the previous discussion has conducted. It is none other than this: That men are accepted or rejected of Christ, not on account of the doctrines they believe, or the ritual they observe, but on account of the motives from which they act, the good or evil which they do, and the kind of life which is thereby developed and formed within them. CHARACTER—not as it may reveal itself outwardly before the eyes of men, but as it *is* inwardly before the eyes of Him who seeth in secret—this, and no mere creed however true or perfect, is the important thing to be kept ever in view. All who have the spirit of Christ, are His children, and are therefore owned and accepted of Him, whatever amount of doctrinal error they may have innocently or unconsciously imbibed; and all who have not His spirit are none of His, whatever doctrines they may profess, or whatever amount of truth they may know. It is not the understanding and believing, but the willing and loving—not the knowing, but the doing, of the Heavenly Father's will, which is the ground

of acceptance with Him, and the test of Christian discipleship. It is possible to have much heavenly light in the understanding, with but little of heavenly warmth in the will. And so, too, there may be many errors in the head with much of God's love in the heart. But it is the state of each one's heart that determines his character. If it be the supreme and governing purpose of his life to know and do the will of the Lord, his heart is right in the sight of his Maker, and his character has the impress of heaven. But if he loves himself above all things, and the perishable things of this world as himself, his heart is wholly wrong; he is a stranger to God's pure love; the warmth and bloom and fragrance of Eden are not his; his character is not of the heavenly type, for his dominant love is of the earth, earthy—the very opposite of that which rules in heaven.

To know what is our real character, then, our character as revealed to the eye of Omniscience—we must know what our ruling love is. We must know whether our supreme and governing purpose be to serve the Lord by doing good to the neighbor, or to serve self by clutching as many as we can of the goods of this world—rendering as little service as possible to the neighbor. This is an infallible test of character—a test which every one may employ in determining his own—viz.: What is our ruling purpose? What is our *end* in life—the end to which our thoughts are chiefly directed, and to the attainment of which

all other acquisitions are held subordinate? Is it to serve God and the neighbor? Or is it to obtain the honors and riches of this world for the mere gratification of pride and self-love? If the former, we are on the direct road to heaven; if the latter, we are as surely on the road to hell. A truly good and heavenly character can result only from cherishing right motives and pursuing heavenly ends; while the opposite kind of character is as sure to result from cherishing wrong motives and pursuing merely selfish and worldly ends. It is the *end* that a man aims at, therefore, and not the doctrine that he believes, which determines his real character. So that a person may be said to be altogether such as his end is. It is the ends we seek, and not the truths or falsities we believe, that make or mar within us the image of Christ. It is these that draw the angels near us, or drive them far away. Accordingly, Swedenborg says:

"Man's ruling end is his very essential life; for man respects as an end what appertains to his life, or, what is the same thing, what appertains to his love. When the good of his neighbor, the general good, the good of the church and of the Lord's kingdom, is the end regarded, in this case man as to his soul is in the Lord's kingdom; for the Lord's kingdom is nothing else but a kingdom of ends and uses respecting the good of the human race. The very angels attendant on man have their abode *solely* in his ends of life. So far as man hath respect to an end of a like quality with what influences the Lord's

kingdom, so far the angels are delighted with him, and conjoin themselves to him as to a brother; but so far as man is influenced by selfish ends, so far the angels recede, and evi spirits from hell accede; for in hell none but selfish ends have rule. From these considerations it may appear of what concern it is for every one to explore and know the origin of his affection, which can only be known from its end."—*A. C.*, 3796.

Now can we not all see that people who hold different doctrines in relation to the Trinity, the Atonement, the plan of Redemption, the philosophy of Regeneration, the nature and time of the Resurrection, &c., may yet have the same or similar *ends* in life? Can we not see that they all may regard as ends "the good of the neighbor, the general good, the good of the church and of the Lord's kingdom"? And in case they do, however they may differ externally, or in their doctrinal beliefs are they not near akin when viewed internally? Are they not alike in respect to their ruling purpose? Have they not all one Master, Christ,—and are they not, therefore, all brethren? If, as Swedenborg declares, "man is altogether such as is the *end* which rules him," and these people are ruled by similar ends, then they must be internally and spiritually alike. Notwithstanding their intellectual or doctrinal differences, they all, clearly, belong to the household of Christ, and constitute portions of one and the same Christian church.

But let no one imagine from what I have said,

that truth is of no more worth than error, or that it is a matter of little consequence what a man believes. The New Church authorizes no such conclusion; neither would I. On the contrary, I hold that a man's belief is of very great importance. I hold that the more and higher truth one receives, so much the more abundantly is he furnished with the *means* of an exalted and noble character—the means of a pure and holy life. I would, therefore, have men seek for truth as for hid treasure. I would have them count it a pearl of great price. I would have them reach after and attain the highest views of truth which they are capable of receiving. But let them guard against the fatal tendency—a tendency so common in all unregenerate minds—to exalt truth to the supreme place. Let them see that they regard it not as an *end*, but only as a means to a righteous life. Regarded intrinsically, and for itself alone, it has a value but little above that of material wealth. And if not employed in the securing of heavenly treasures—if not applied to the searching out and removal of the heart's deep corruptions—it is as certain, some day, to take to itself wings and fly away, as is the gold that the miser hoards. When we begin to attach more importance to what we *believe* than to how we *live*, then we raise truth above its proper sphere; we no longer regard it as a means, but come to look upon it as an end. Faith is then exalted above charity; doctrine is placed before life; believing is made paramount to doing.

In such case we are really *in* the doctrine of "faith alone," however emphatically we may repudiate that doctrine with our lips.

Besides, multitudes who have been taught false doctrines, have, nevertheless, through penitence, and prayer, and a devout reading and study of the Word, and a life of steadfast obedience, been made partakers in a large measure of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. The Comforter has come unto them, graciously fulfilling the divine prediction: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth." It is a mistake to judge the mental condition of these people by the creeds they have subscribed. They are wiser than their creeds. They are gifted with perception. Love to God and the neighbor, which is the life and soul of all truth, is in their hearts. Therefore, when they read the Word, their minds are illustrated in regard to its meaning. Having in their hearts the spirit of truth, they are guided by that spirit into all truth needful to their further purification. By faithfully *doing* the Master's will, they are made receptive of His spirit, and are thus given "to *know* of the doctrine," agreeable to divine promise. And this, too, accords with the teaching of Swedenborg. For he assures us that "*every one* has illustration according to the quality of his affection of truth; and the quality of the affection of truth is such *as the good of life is.*"—(*A. C.*, 7012.) And, speaking of those "who are in the af-

fection of truth from good, and thence in the desire of growing wise," he says: "They apprehend the Word as to its interiors; wherefore they from the Word *make to themselves doctrine*, to which they apply the sense of the letter."—(*A. C.*, 9382.) In harmony with this, and instructing us still further on the same subject, the great Seer says:

"The angels attendant on man perceive the Word according to the internal sense. This [the internal sense] is communicated to the man who is in good, and reads the Word, and desires truth from affection; hence he hath illustration and perception; for with those who are in good and thence in the affection of truth, the intellectual principle of the mind is open into heaven, and their soul, that is, their internal man, is in consort with the angels."—*A. C.*, 8694.

The New Church, then, so far from lightly esteeming truth, teaches that men are everywhere enlightened, regenerated, and saved *by means* of it. Even they whose creeds are burdened with error, and who have imbibed many false doctrines from their religious teachers, are still blessed with a large amount of truth touching their duty to God and their fellowmen. And if they are obedient to the dictates of duty, and earnestly strive to do the will of God *as they understand it*, they have His Spirit to enlighten and guide them; they receive truth by an internal way, above what is taught in their creeds; they are

gifted with perception; and therefore, when they read the Word, "they make to themselves doctrine," under the enlightening influence of that Spirit which the Saviour promised should guide into all truth. Even these, therefore, are not saved without truth, but solely through its instrumentality. So true is it, what the incarnate Word,—the Eternal Truth itself,—has declared, "No one cometh unto the Father but by me."

To conclude: If the views of Catholicity as set forth in these pages are to be accepted as those of the New Church—and how can they be rejected without rejecting at the same time the authority of Swedenborg?—then it becomes those of us who belong to the nominal New Church seriously to consider whether we, as a body, have duly exemplified this Catholicity. It becomes us to consider whether our attitude toward other churches, or the measure of freedom and toleration hitherto extended to members of our own church, is just what it should be. It becomes us to consider whether we have a right, in view of existing facts as well as of the teachings of Swedenborg, to claim for ourselves the exclusive title, as well as the exclusive powers and privileges, of the Church of Christ. Can we persist in the belief that Swedenborgians are the only true Christians upon earth, and that all others are Heathens or Gentiles?—can we continue to repudiate the baptism administered by other Christians,

and deny that it can have any validity or any efficacy—*unless* it be an efficacy imparted to it from the nether regions?—can we continue to ignore the existence of heaven-born charity and of all spiritual life in every Christian communion but our own?—can we persist in maintaining that the prerogatives of the Christian church belong exclusively to ourselves?—can we continue to believe and act in this manner, without a manifest departure from the catholic teachings of Swedenborg as well as the suggestions of common sense, and a palpable violation of the rules of Christian decorum as well as the laws of heavenly charity? This, I submit, is worthy of our most serious consideration. If we have adopted mistaken notions in regard to the New Church, and have thereby been led to assume a mistaken attitude, the sooner we abandon both the notions and the attitude, the better. It is never too late to learn, nor too late to mend. Our attitude is clearly wrong; and our own good not less than the good of others, demands that it be speedily changed. I long to see something of the broad and beautiful catholicity of the New Church exemplified by the body that bears this name. I long to see a more conspicuous illustration, by our people, of that which we are told "was the essential doctrine in the ancient churches"—the doctrine of charity. I long to see a general and practical recognition of the simple truth "that he is a true Christian, who lives as a Christian, that is, as the Lord

teaches," though his faith, when formally stated, may differ considerably from our own. I ong to see it as heartily acknowledged by all professed New Churchmen, as it is plainly taught by Swedenborg—acknowledged, too, not merely with the lips, but in life and practice—that all who truly love the Lord and live in charity toward the neighbor, however they may differ in doctrine and ritual, are owned and accepted of the Great Redeemer; that they are internally conjoined to Him, are all members of His church, and should, therefore, regard and treat each other as brethren. When the catholicity of the New Jerusalem shall come to be thus exemplified, it will do much, I think, to disarm prejudice, and win for our doctrines the favorable regard of all generous and liberal minds.

And let the views of catholicity here unfolded be received and acted upon by Christians generally, and what a change would be wrought in nearly all existing churches! No longer expecting or desiring a dead uniformity in matters of faith, seeing that this is not according to divine order, the utmost degree of intellectual freedom would be everywhere respected and encouraged. New views of truth that often dawn on waiting minds, would cease to alarm or disturb. Church schisms, arising from unequal mental growth and the occasional introduction of new views by some, would no longer exist. There would be no room for schism. The occupation of heresy-

hunters would be at an end. Quiet churches would cease to be thrown into convulsions by the suspicion, or the more terrible *whispers*, that their minister is departing from the "standards." Live clergymen would spring up in a thousand pulpits, where now are only dead ones. Mr. Dry-as-dust himself would begin to give his people something besides mere creed-gleanings and doctrinal expositions with "proof-texts." Deacon Fossil and all his tribe would have some other object in going to church besides measuring the prayers and the sermon by the Confession of Faith. The bigot-maker's trade, since there would no longer be a demand for his wares, would be given up; and parsons Littleheart and Thimblebrain would find it necessary to choose some other topics for their sermons than the dreadful lake prepared for all who fail to think just as they do. Neighboring ministers would find something better to do than to array their congregations against each other on the ground of difference in opinion. Towns and villages of a thousand inhabitants would no longer be divided into a dozen worshipping congregations, because of the essential importance which each one attaches to his own particular views; but they would together form one church and congregation, with charity for the fundamental article of their creed. Men would be held in esteem, not on account of their beliefs, but on account of their lives. Sects might still remain, but the mischievous and hateful

spirit of sect would be cast out. Christian life and character—a meek and gentle temper, patience in suffering, resignation under trial, a noble self-forgetfulness and self-denial, a generous devotion to the good of others, an unswerving love of justice, a trustful, humble, forbearing, and forgiving spirit—these, accompanied by a devout acknowledgment of Him from whom all good dispositions and all right feelings proceed, would be held up as the chief objects of desire with Christians, and surer tests of Christian discipleship than any mere form of faith or articles of belief. There would be but one party in all the churches, and this the party of Christian freedom and progress—the party seeking, as its single and supreme object, an inward spiritual renewal after the image of the Lord Jesus Christ—the party bent on overcoming, in the strength of the Lord, the kingdom of Satan, the demons of pride, avarice, selfishness, sensuality, and all other infernal dispositions which defile the human heart, and establishing, in their stead, the opposite heavenly dispositions—Christ's own kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Let the views of Catholicity here proclaimed be generally received and adopted, and these results cannot fail to follow. That principle, which in ancient times united so many and various churches into one, is able to do the very same now, provided it be acknowledged as a fundamental in the church. It *is* fundamental in the Christian system. Christ Jesus

himself has so declared. Let all His followers accept it as such, and its transforming power will soon be seen, and its wondrous influence be felt. May the Lord hasten that good time.

PART II.

UNCATHOLICITY OF NEW-CHURCHMEN.

UNCATHOLICITY OF NEW-CHURCHMEN.

CHAPTER I.

OUR SPIRITUAL MOTHER.

THE main purpose of the previous pages has been to unfold and exhibit the catholicity of the New Church. And since Swedenborg is the acknowledged herald and exponent of this Church, therefore frequent quotations have been made from his writings. But in prosecuting his task, the author has had occasion sometimes to refer to the singular lack of catholicity among New-Churchmen, and even to the existtence of the opposite characteristic in his own communion to a lamentable extent. These references have necessarily been brief, and of a general character; and, therefore, in justice to himself as well as to his readers, and in the hope, at the same time, of rendering permanently useful a few articles which might otherwise never see the light, he purposes, in this

SECOND PART, to give a few facts which may serve to illustrate the Uncatholicity of New-Churchmen, or to show how imperfectly the large, free, and tolerant spirit of the New Jerusalem has hitherto been exemplified in the nominal New Church.

It is hardly necessary to state that the following chapters were not, at the time of their preparation, intended for these pages. The original design of each will be made known in the proper place. Before coming to the article whose caption has been placed at the head of the present chapter, it seems necessary to enter into an explanation, and to give a somewhat extended extract from a printed discourse, which has been honored, certainly in an unusual, if not in a flattering way.

In the Spring of 1861 the author sent a manuscript sermon, for publication, to the London *Intellectual Repository*, the organ of the New Church Conference in England. The sermon was upon that commandment of the Decalogue which enjoins, as a religious duty, the honoring of father and mother. While the manuscript was on its way to London, the editorial management of the magazine to which it was sent, passed into new hands; and before it reached the present editor (Rev. W. Bruce), the writer received from that gentleman, through a mutual friend, a polite invitation to become a contributor to the columns of the *Repository*. The sermon was sent to Mr. Bruce by the former editor, and was subsequently

published in the *Repository*, without further request from the author. But in publishing it, the editor thought proper to append the following foot-note, which was probably deemed necessary to shield himself and his magazine against the reproach which might otherwise be incurred by the admission of so much heresy into its columns:

"This sermon has come to us through the former editor to whom it had been sent; it has, therefore, been waiting insertion. In fact we felt some hesitation about inserting it, lest it might provoke controversy. We think the talented author has displayed, on one point, some degree of theological eccentricity, if not perversity, in pleading so earnestly for the maternal claims upon us of one to whom the Lord's words may be applied—'She is not my wife, neither am I her husband.' We have every wish to deal tenderly and even affectionately with what we are accustomed to call the Old Church; but we cannot consent to the opinion that there is no *visible* distinction to be made between the Old and the New, and that the New Jerusalem is only to be found in the communion of saints."

Now, that the reader may see what it was in the sermon, which called forth this charitable foot-note, it is necessary to give the whole of that portion of it which provoked the comment. He will learn from this what is regarded, by probably the greater portion of the nominal New Church in England as well as in America, as evidence of "theological eccentricity, if not perversity." We omit such portions of the ser-

mon as are known to be generally acceptable to professed New-Churchmen, and give only that part which is thought to argue an eccentric or perverse will in the writer. Even this is somewhat lengthy; but as it is altogether germainto the subject to which these pages are dedicated, we are the less anxious to curtail it.

Having explained the spiritual import of the command to honor our father, the sermon proceeds to unfold the meaning of the other clause of the text, in the manner following:

"But we are commanded to honor our *mother* as well as our father. And who is our mother, according to the spiritual import of this word? Who should she be, but that star-crowned and sun-encircled woman—the wife of the Lamb—the Lord's own church? 'Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?' exclaimed the Divine Saviour, when speaking from His state of humiliation. 'And he stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said: Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.' The church of Christ, then, is our spiritual mother; the doers of the Heavenly Father's will—the Lord's own disciples.

"But there are, we know, professed disciples and genuine disciples of the Lord Jesus. There are some who are Christians merely on the outside, and others who are Christians within as well as without—Christians in reality, as well as by profession—Christians through and through, even to their heart's core.

But the spurious and the genuine, the tares and the wheat, are all mixed together in this world; and only the eye of the all-seeing One can discriminate between them. For the Lord alone knoweth the internals of men. He only looketh upon the heart. And to those officious servants who are so anxious to separate the tares from the wheat, and who, in their hearts, eagerly inquire—'Wilt thou, then, that we go and gather them up?' the Lord's answer forever is—'Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest.' This, then, is the declared will of the Master: that both the wheat and the tares—the genuine and the professed disciples—the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one, be permitted to remain a mixed company, until that great harvest-time when the internal quality of all hearts shall be revealed. And any attempt, on our part, to separate them sooner, or the indulgence even of the thought that such a thing is possible, can produce only mischief.

"Where, then, it will be asked, is the spiritual mother whom we are commanded to honor? Where and what is the church of Christ? I answer: As there are obviously two classes of disciples, or of people who *call* themselves disciples, so there are and must be two kinds of churches. As those who profess themselves the followers of Christ are evidently not *all* His true followers, so those who profess to be of His Church are not *all* of His true church. There is, then, the *professed* church, commonly known and spoken of as the church *visible*, composed of a mixed multitude, including all who profess themselves the followers of the Lord Jesus; and there is also the *true* church, commonly known and spoken of as the church

*in*visible, including none but those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life—the Lord's own sheep. This latter is called the *invisible* church, because its members are unknown to man,—because its limits, therefore, cannot be defined with precision. Is it asked, now, which of these churches, the visible or the invisible, we are required to honor?—for one is undoubtedly superior to the other. I answer—both; just as we are required to obey the Lord's commandments in their lower as well as in their higher senses.

"Every company of Christian believers organized for purposes of worship, instruction, and mutual edification in spiritual things, is a Christian church—a *visible*, but not a *true* church; for I suppose that in nearly all such companies of people in this world, there are some whom the Good Shepherd knows to be not His sheep. And every such company of worshippers is a spiritual mother to some persons, and performs for them the offices of a mother. And all such companies, in the aggregate, constitute the entire visible church of Christ, or the spiritual mother in the widest but not in the highest sense. Think of what this church has done, and is still doing through its various branches, to aid in building up the Redeemer's kingdom, or in bringing down from heaven that Holy City, whose 'light is like unto a stone most precious'! Think how its united labors are hastening forward that glorious era, when 'the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and God Himself shall be with them, their God'! Think of what it has done, and is doing, in the way of preserving and translating the written Word, in multiplying copies thereof by the million, and circulating them in all the various languages of the earth almost as free as air. Think

how much it has done and is doing to elucidate the letter of the Word—to implant in human hearts a love and reverence for its simple precepts—to teach many of its solemn truths in a form accommodated to the states of natural men, or men in the early stages of regeneration—to keep alive the belief in Christ as the all-sufficient Redeemer and Saviour, and a belief in a future state of rewards for the righteous and punishment for the disobedient! Pray tell me, brethren, is there no gratitude, no love, no honor, due from us toward that great visible body of professed disciples, who have done and are still doing so much for the Master's cause? Does it become us, as children of the Heavenly Father, now that we are blessed with more abundant knowledge of God and the eternal world than our mother ever enjoyed, to cherish feelings of unkindness, disrespect, or aversion toward that mother?—to speak of her, as some are accustomed to speak, in terms of disparagement and contempt? In the name of our common Master, does such conduct become us?

"Or, to bring the subject nearer home. I have called the aggregate Christian organizations our spiritual mother. I speak advisedly in what I say.—Nearly all of us, I presume, who now rejoice in the glad light of the New Jerusalem, have been born and nurtured in the bosom or under the auspices of some one of these churches, known as Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, or Unitarian—no matter what the name. There we received our earliest religious instruction. There we learned to read and reverence God's Holy Word. There we were taught to obey the commandments—to remember and keep holy the Sabbath day—to respect the forms and ordinances of religion—and perhaps were taught some

simple prayer. There, too, we learned, through religious books and tracts, as well as the public preaching of the Gospel, many valuable lessons of duty, of piety, and of Christian love. I submit that the church which has done these things for us—be its name or creed whatever it may—is our own immediate spiritual mother, and should be so regarded by us. Why not? She has performed for us the duties and offices of a mother. She watched over our souls in their earlier stages of regeneration, with all the care and solicitude of a mother. She furnished us with spiritual food and clothing, and nursed us with a mother's sleepless anxiety. What though the food she provided were not all healthy or nutritious! What though the spiritual garments she put upon us were not all white and clean, and neatly fitted as if woven in the looms of heaven! She furnished the best that she knew how to furnish. She acted according to her highest wisdom; and what more could any mother do? Besides, we should not forget that whatever there is of Christ's kingdom or church within us, had its foundation laid by the hands of that same mother;—that to her, under God, we are indebted for the rudiments, at least, of all that we at present know and enjoy of the kingdom of heaven. And shall we now look down upon that mother with proud disdain? Shall we point at her with very scorn, because she is old and infirm, and her eyesight dim? Shall we deride her for her ignorance, her imperfections, or her errors? As justly might we deride our natural mother, when the infirmities of age or disease have laid her prostrate, or insultingly taunt her with her ignorance or errors because we have become wiser than she. And if it were an act of flagrant impiety thus to treat a natural mother, is it, I ask, any the

less impious to treat our spiritual mother in a corresponding manner? If due honor to a natural mother requires that we should respect and love her, with all her errors and infirmities, and seek to do her all the good we can—to do it, too, in the kindest, tenderest, and most loving way—then, due honor to our spiritual mother demands of us a like filial regard and filial conduct. We need not love or cling to the errors she inculcates—it is in no such way that we best honor our natural mother; but by rejecting her errors, or with God's help rising clear of them, we should yet endeavor to cherish for her that filial gratitude, respect, and love, which is ever due to a mother, and which is implied by the term *honor*. Thus should each one of us seek to honor that particular church in which he has been born and nurtured, and which has performed for him the offices of a mother.

"But there is a still higher sense to this word *mother*, in which it denotes all the children of God everywhere; all who have attained to a vital union with Christ by a life according to the divine precepts, be their creed, profession, or outward fellowship what it may. This is the highest or celestial meaning of the word. To quote the language of the illumined Swedenborg—"By mother, in this sense, is meant the communion of saints; in other words, the Lord's church dispersed throughout the whole world."—(*T. C. R.*, 307.) This "communion of saints" is no visibly organized body of people, but all whose hearts are in sympathy with Christ and in fellowship with each other—whose souls are knit together by the invisible but mighty bonds of heaven's own love—who are one in spirit, however they may differ in name, or in outward church relations—who enjoy an internal heart-communion with each other, being all united to

the true and living Vine, and drawing their life from Him as the branch lives by virtue of its union with the trunk. This is the true but invisible church of Christ. Strange that any among us should speak of it as though it were a shadow, a chimera, a thing of the imagination merely, because its limits cannot be defined geographically or numerically, or because we can never say of it, "Lo, here! or lo there!" Not only is this church a substantial reality, but it is the only true and living church, including within its ample pale all God's children here below, and none others. This is the church which is internally associated with the white-robed armies above, and is the medium through which heaven comes down to earth, and angels hold communion with men. No narrow or exclusive sect is it, but a true church catholic, forming within all the sects, and gradually breaking down or overleaping their barriers:—a church that is becoming freer, broader, and stronger, as the years roll on, and as it gathers closer and closer around its living Head, and the life of Christ descends into it with increased fulness and power. This is the Bride, the wife of the Lamb. This is the church which the revelator saw 'descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God,' and, which he describes under the figure of the holy city New Jerusalem. This is the mother in the highest sense—in the true New Jerusalem sense;—the heavenly mother whose face beams with the benignity of the Heavenly Father's heart, who fondly cherishes all His children, clasping them tenderly in her embrace, and imbuing their hearts with her sweet spirit.

"This, then, is the mother whom we of the New Jerusalem are especially required to honor. And we honor this mother, first, by acknowledging her as our

mother in the highest sense; secondly, by learning to love and to feel ourselves in fellowship with all who have the spirit of Christ, whatever their name or creed; and thirdly, by endeavoring to show our ourselves worthy children of such a mother—striving evermore to do the Father's will, and seeking fellowship with all who bear the Father's likeness. By thus honoring this mother, our hearts are enlarged; we are made broader and truer men and women; our souls are opened to a freer influx of heavenly life; our companionship with the angels is rendered more intimate and tender; we are brought nearer to the moral likeness of Him 'who is over all, God blessed for ever,' and a state of heavenly peace and rest is infallibly secured."

Now, as the sermon, from which the above is an extract, did not undertake to argue the question as to the whereabout of the Lord's true church, and as it seemed clear, from the editor's foot-note on page 171, that he had not duly considered this subject, or was not aware of the weight of evidence that might be adduced from Swedenborg in support of the teaching of this sermon to which he objected, the author immediately prepared, and sent for publication in the same magizine, the following article on "Our Spiritual Mother," designed as an answer to Mr. Bruce's foot-note. This article the editor declined publishing, because he wished, as stated on the cover of the October issue of his magazine, "to avoid a discussion in the pages of the *Repository*, on a subject on which we believe its readers to be pretty well agreed."

Nor is there one of the recognized organs of the New Church in America, that could be induced to publish this article. And the reason why it is published in these pages along with the facts here stated, is, that all who are interested in this subject may have the opportunity of duly weighing the argument presented, and which there seems to be no other way of placing before them; and also that they may consider whether the persistent effort, on the part of the conductors of our New Church periodicals, to discourage the calm and free discussion of such subjects, is the best way to show our confidence in, or our loyalty to, the truth. *Is* it creditable to us, as a body, or is the circumstance one calculated to win for our doctrines the favorable regard of liberal minds, that an article, written in a calm and charitable spirit, and substantially upon this question, *What does Swedenborg mean by the New Jerusalem Church?*—cannot be admitted into the columns of a single one of our recognized New Church organs? Does such a fact illustrate the free, generous, and catholic spirit of the New Jerusalem? Is it not, on the contrary, felt by all liberal minds to be a rather humiliating and disgraceful fact? Does it not form a striking contrast to the beautiful catholicity of the New Church?

We give here the article in question, unaltered and unabridged. The candid reader can judge of it for himself—and of the wisdom and justice, too, of that policy, which aims to exclude all such articles from

the columns of New Church journals, under the plea of a desire to avoid controversy.

OUR SPIRITUAL MOTHER.

MR. EDITOR—I thank you for the publication, in your August issue, of my sermon upon "honoring our Father and Mother," which had been sent your predecessor in the editorial chair, some months previous. Nor will I complain of your foot-note, wherein you take the liberty of dissenting from some of the views expressed in my sermon, and speak of my "displaying, on one point, some degree of theological excentricity, if not perversity." It is upon this particular point, that I respectfully ask the use of your columns, for the purpose, not merely of making myself better understood, but of exhibiting more fully the grounds and reasons for that conviction, which you evidently consider so erroneous. And if I fail to discuss the subject in a becoming and Christian temper, I will not complain of any epithets which you may think my uncharitableness deserves; and will meekly bear any rebuke which you may think proper to administer. I am not conscious of a disposition on my part to contend for *victory*, but only for that which I devoutly believe to be the *truth*. But if you discover in me any such perverse inclination, then it is your duty, and no uncharitableness, to rebuke it. And if I am not already in the truth on the subject

upon which I propose to write, I have faith to believe that the Lord will guide me to it, in answer to my earnest prayer; and possibly you, my brother, may be the providential means of enlightening me. I can only assure you of my readiness to listen with candor, and to weigh with fairness such views and arguments opposed to mine, as you or others may have to offer.

I am the more solicitous to have this question fairly and thoroughly discussed, because I regard it as one of great practical importance. If the prevailing view among New-Churchmen as to the whereabout of the Lord's true church, be erroneous—as in my humble opinion it is—it needs no argument to prove that it is a grave error, and one that must ultimately produce no small amount of mischief. Our feelings and couduct toward other professed Christians will necessarily be influenced in a good degree by the manner in which we decide this question. If the little handful of Christians popularly known as Swedenborgians, are at this time the only true and faithful followers upon earth of the Lord Jesus Christ,—if the Lord has actually "*left*" all other Christian organizations, and now has His abode exclusively with us, agreeable to the understanding and teaching of several of our American New Church ministers—in short, if we Swedenborgians are exclusively the Lord's own people, His true and only church on earth, and alone have authority from Him to administer the Chris-

tian ordinances and perform the duties of a church, as is gravely contended, then it is right and proper that we should know this and proclaim it. But suppose it is *not* true! Suppose there are some true followers of the Lord Jesus elsewhere than among Swedenborgians! Suppose the Lord still dwells in the hearts of other professed Christians as well as in ours, giving to them, not less than to us, authority to teach and baptize in His name! What then? Is no harm likely to result from our grave mistake? No harm to ourselves and no harm to others? Is our bearing toward other Christians likely to be such as it ought to be, or such as it otherwise would be?

The question, then, which I propose to discuss—which your foot-note, Mr. Editor, *invites* me to discuss—is not merely abstract and theoretical by any means, but one of high practical moment. It is a question, as I view it, lying back of nearly every other question, about which there is or has been any difference of opinion among New-Churchmen. It is one intimately connected with our whole ecclesiasticism, and whose decision, this way or that—according to your view or mine—must seriously affect our attitude and bearing toward other Christians, and so retard or promote our own spiritual progress, and the progress of truth through our instrumentality. And if we can discuss this question calmly and thoroughly and in the right spirit, however we may fail at last to see eye

to eye, I cannot doubt but truth will be the gainer by the discussion—certainly it cannot suffer damage.

It is hardly necessary for me to say, that I, in common with yourself and other professed New-Churchmen, acknowledge a New Dispensation—yes, a New Church; and I acknowledge Swedenborg as the divinely appointed herald of this church. And whatever views I hold upon the question I am about to discuss, I claim to have derived from his teachings, and to be in strict conformity therewith. The question is, Where, in this our day, is the church of Christ—the church of the New Jerusalem, if you please? The answer to this question will, most assuredly, be the answer to the question raised in my sermon: Where and who is the mother that we are commanded to honor?—a question which my text (the fourth commandment of the Decalogue) did not allow me to pass by without an attempt, at least, to answer. You dissent from my answer in such decided terms as leave no doubt that you deem it far from correct. Let us see if it be so.

Who, then, is the Mother that we are required by the fourth commandment to honor, and where is she? As a New-Churchman, I naturally turn to the illumined Swedenborg for light upon this question. He has told us what is to be understood by Mother, and what by honoring her, in each of the three senses, natural, spiritual, and celestial. In the natural sense,

natural parents are meant by father and mother; and the precept to *honor* them, requires, among other things, that children should be "grateful for benefits received from them, remembering with all thankfulness that they have been fed and clothed by them," &c. In the spiritual sense, our author tells us "by honoring father and mother, is meant to revere and love God and the church." He does not, it is true, tell us *what* church he refers to in this instance, whether the visible or invisible, the nominal or the real. But it is plain enough that he refers to a different kind of church from the one he speaks of when he comes to unfold for us the *celestial* sense of this precept. It is plain that he does *not* refer to "the Lord's church dispersed throughout the whole world," which he calls also "the communion of saints," and which he assures us *is the New Jerusalem.* Indeed he tells us (n. 307, T. C. R.) that he means by this latter, not the same church that he does where he gives us the spiritual sense of mother; for he says, "this church, and *not* the former, is" &c. Thus, mother in the spiritual sense denotes the church; and in the celestial sense it denotes the church also. Yet these churches are not identically the same. There is clearly a distinction between them. What *is* that distinction? What is it according to your own view of the subject, Mr. Editor? To my mind it is indicated with sufficient clearness by Swedenborg himself. For he has told us what church he

means when he gives us the celestial sense of mother. He means the *invisible* or *real* church—"the communion of saints," or all the Lord's people, by whatever name they may be called, "dispersed throughout the whole world." If, then, there is good ground (and I presume this will not be questioned) for distinguishing the church, as Christians have been in the habit of doing, into *visible* and *invisible*, or *nominal* and *real*, it is clear enough what church Swedenborg must refer to in giving us the spiritual sense of mother. I have, in my sermon, assumed that it is the *visible* or *nominal* church. And that this is not mere assumption on my part, is evident, I think, from Swedenborg's own language. For he says: "The reason why, in a spiritual sense, mother means the church, is, because as a natural mother nourishes her children with natural food, so the church nourishes her children with spiritual food."—(*Ib.* 306.) Now, it is only in an organized form, in some such form as makes it a practical, working, visible institution, that the church can provide spiritual food for her children. It is only in some such visible form, that she can print and circulate the Bible, publish books, tracts, and newspapers, support Sabbath-schools, maintain public worship, or, in short, do any of those things which correspond to what a natural mother does for her children. The very circumstance, therefore, which Swedenborg here alleges as the reason why mother means the church, is itself proof that it is the

visible or nominal church to which he refers—or the church considered as an institution.

Now, I maintain that the aggregate Christian organizations upon earth, or the sum total of Christian believers organized for purposes of worship and edification in spiritual things, constitute the entire visible Christian church, or the spiritual mother in the widest sense. And if it be asked what maternal acts or duties this church has performed, the answer is at hand. It is written in enduring characters upon our whole Christian civilization. She has translated and preserved the written Word; she has printed and circulated copies thereof by the million, in nearly every language under heaven; she has done much, by her industry and research, to elucidate the letter of the Word; she has implanted in myriads of human hearts a reverence for its simple precepts; she has taught many of its essential truths in a form accommodated to the earlier stages of regeneration; she has kept alive the belief in Christ as the Son of the living God and the all-sufficient Redeemer and Saviour. And she has not only *done*, but is still *doing*, these things for the children of men—things which correspond to those that a kind and provident mother does for her children. Are not these deeds good and useful? Are they not such as fairly entitle the church that has performed and is still performing them, to our reverence, love, and honor?

Then, who is it to whom the greater proportion of

nominal New-Churchmen at this time are indebted for the *remains* that have been implanted in them, and the religious culture they have received? Is it not those various branches or denominations of the Christian Church—of the *Old* church, as they are often, though I think erroneously, called—in which they have been born and nurtured? Yes: nearly every professed New-Churchman of our time is indebted to some branch or sect of what we call the Old church, for his earliest religious lessons and religious impressions. Some one of the various sects has tanght him to read and reverence the Word of God; to learn and obey the divine commandments; to remember and keep holy the Sabbath day; to respect the forms and ordinances of religion; to repent of his sins, and invoke God's forgiveness. Aud has not this instruction been good and valuable to him, spite of the errors, too, that may have mingled with it? Where and what would he have been without it? It is the foundation of whatever of Christ's kingdom there is, or is to be, within him. And now the question is, how should such Christian sect or church be regarded by one who has been thus blessed through her instrumentality? Has she not performed for him the duties and offices of a mother? And, if so, is she not entitled to his filial gratitude, love, and homage? Can he withhold his gratitude, or fail to remember with thankfulness her deeds of maternal kindness, without a manifest violation of the fourth commandment? To my mind the answer is plain enough.

Perhaps you may think, with some of our American New Church ministers, that the Christian organizations to which I refer, are *not* Christian; that they are destitute of the spirit and life of Christ; that they are in league with Satan, and can, therefore, have no maternal claims upon any of God's children. But I submit that so sweeping and severe a judgment as this, in view of facts patent to us all, ought not to be formed except upon the fullest and clearest evidence. And I propose to show, upon the clear testimony of Swedenborg, that, so far from this, the organizations to which I refer, are *not* forsaken of God, and *not* destitute of His spirit and life; but, on the contrary, that they constitute or include a part, and *a very large and important part*, too, of the New Church on earth.

So much for the obligation imposed by the spiritual sense of the command under consideration. Now for the supreme or celestial sense of this precept—and that will show whether or not we are required to honor, as a mother, any other than the nominally New Church; or whether any others than Swedenborgians really belong to the New Jerusalem. And the question seems to me one of the first importance to those who claim to be of the New Church, and which demands, therefore, the most careful consideration.

"In the CELESTIAL SENSE," says Swedenborg, "by father is meant our Lord Jesus Christ, and by mother

the communion of saints, in other words, His church dispersed throughout the whole world."—(*T. C. R.*, 307.) Now, who are meant here by "the communion of saints"? All the members of the nominal New Church, and none others? Swedenborgians merely? The idea is preposterous. It is really too absurd for any sane mind to entertain. Evidently our author meant, by this expression, to include all good people—all the children of God everywhere—all who are in conjunction with the Lord; and that, too, wholly irrespective of their creed, profession, or outward church relations. And if Swedenborgians do not constitute the sum total of God's people, then, clearly, some others are included in "His church dispersed throughout the whole world." But should a doubt still linger in the mind of any one as to what Swedenborg here means by "the communion of saints," he may find the author's own explanation of the expression in *Arcana Cœlestia*, n. 7396. He is there speaking of the societies that constitute the Lord's true church, and he says they are "scattered through the whole world, and consist of those who are in love to the Lord and in charity toward the neighbor. . . . These societies are not only within the church [i. e., the *visible* or *nominal* church] but also out of it; and, taken together, are called the Lord's church scattered and collected *from the good in the whole world*, which is also called *a communion*. This communion, or this church, is the Lord's kingdom in the earth, conjoined

to the Lord's kingdom in the heavens and thus conjoined to the Lord himself." This settles, beyond controversy, what our author means by "the communion of saints" in *T. C. R.*, 307. He means the Lord's kingdom on earth, or all the good people in the world—as well those without as those within the pale of the visible church—who are conjoined to Him by love.

Observe, now—for the fact is one worthy of special attention in this connection—that this communion of saints, this invisible but real church, consisting exclusively of the Lord's own sheep "dispersed throughout the whole world," is "*the New Jerusalem*" referred to in the Apocalypse, "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." This is declared by Swedenborg himself, in language too plain to be misunderstood. For, after giving us the celestial sense of mother, as above, he proceeds with his reasons, citing passages from the Word, according to his usual custom, whereby the thing alleged is made "evident." "That the church of the Lord is meant by mother in this sense is evident from these passages:"—And note here the passages that he immediately proceeds to quote as proof-texts —each of them from the Apocalypse, and each referring to the New Jerusalem, the Lamb's wife:—"I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—(Rev. xxi. 2.) "The angel said to John, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife; and he showed me

that great city, the holy Jerusalem."—(*Ib.*, xxi. 9, 10.) "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."—(xix. 7.) Then, after speaking of "a New Church which is at this day establishing by the Lord," and referring to *A. R.*, in. 880, 881, he adds—as if to place his meaning beyond dispute—"this church, and not the former, is the wife and mother in this sense." In what sense? Why, in the sense he had just explained—in the sense that shows the New Jerusalem to be the Lord's true but invisible church, embracing *all* "throughout the whole world" who are conjoined to Him by love, no matter what their name, color, clime, or creed. The mother, in this broad sense, denotes the New Church which is signified by the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse. And can there be any doubt that there are in this church multitudes who are not of our *nominal* New Jerusalem? I think not. And I challenge the production of a single passage from the writings of Swedenborg, going to prove that the *real* New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse is any other than God's people of every name "scattered throughout the world," or that church which is signified by mother in the celestial sense.

Turn, now, to the Apocalypse—to that chapter (xxi.) which describes the New Jerusalem, and where we should expect to learn of what class of people it is composed. And, agreeable to our expectation, we are here taught, who shall, and who shall not, enter

into it—or who do, and who do not, belong to it. The former are "they who are written in the Lamb's book of life," which words are explained by Swedenborg to mean, "they who believe in the Lord, and live according to his commandments in the Word."—(*A. R.*, 925.) These constitute the New Church specifically, i. e., the New Church in Christendom. We are also told that "all who are in the good of life, and believe in the Lord" are meant by those who walk in the light of the New Jerusalem—that they are such as "see divine truths from interior illumination, and live according to them."—(*Ib.*, 920.) We are further told "that all the particulars of the doctrine of the New Jerusalem relate to love to the Lord and love toward the neighbor;" and that "love to the Lord consists in trusting in the Lord and doing his commandments; and to do his commandments constitutes love toward the neighbor."—(*Ib.*, 903.) And in the True Christian Religion, where "the theology of the *New* Church" is unfolded, and where, therefore, whenever "the church" is mentioned, we have a right to infer that the author means the church of the New Jerusalem, it is said: "The fellowship or communion called the church, consists of all such persons as have the church abiding in them, and it gains admission into every one when he is regenerating; and every one becomes regenerate in proportion as he abstains from the evils of sin, and shuns them as he would troops of infernal spirits."—

(510.) Now, is it to be believed that we Swedenborgians are the only people in Christendom who "believe in the Lord and live according to his commandments in the Word"? That we alone "see divine truths from interior illumination, and live according to them"? That we alone "trust in the Lord and do His commandments"? That we alone are in a "regenerating" state? That we alone "abstain from evils, and shun them as sins"? The idea seems to me so preposterous, and the conceit which it indicates so terrible, that, did I not actually know of its existence, I could not believe that any sane mind could, for a moment, entertain it. But if there are any beside Swedenborgians, who "trust in the Lord, and do His commandments," then it is clear that there are those *outside* of our communion who belong to the New Jerusalem. Then the *real* New Church is broader and more inclusive than the little sect which bears that name. And if there be any *in* our communion who do not "shun evils as sins" (see *A. R.*, 952), or do not "trust in the Lord and do His commandments," then it is equally clear that they constitute no part of the genuine New Church. They belong to the *nominal* but not to the *real* New Jerusalem.

And so we find that Swedenborg, in explaining that chapter of the Apocalypse—the only chapter in the Bible which describes the New Jerusalem, and tells us what class of people really belong to it—the chap-

ter which, before all others, we should consult to learn the nature and whereabout of the genuine New Church — is entirely consistent with what he teaches in *T. C. R.*, n. 307, as above quoted. In the one instance, he tells us that the New Church consists of all those "who believe in the Lord and live according to His commandments,"—no matter what creed they profess, or by what name they are known, or to what sect they belong—*and of none others.* In the other, he assures us that this church includes all God's children "dispersed throughout the whole world," and constituting what he calls "the communion of saints." Thus we find him here, as elsewhere, in complete harmony with himself. And will you refer me, Mr. Editor, to one solitary passage in all his writings in which he teaches a different doctrine on this subject, or which justifies the belief that the body of disciples which *we* call the New Church, is really the Apocalyptic New Jerusalem. If there be any such passage, I frankly confess that I have no knowledge of it.

In harmony with what I have now said, and as a further justification of the distinction made in my sermon between the visible or *nominal*, and the invisible or *real* church, take what Swedenborg says of the ascending degrees of the relationship of neighbor. These, according to our author's enumeration, are an individual, a society, our country, the church, the kingdom of the Lord, and the Lord himself. "These are

the degrees of the relationship of neighbor, and according to these, love ascends in all who are influenced by the love of the neighbor."—(*N. J. D.*, 96.) Each of these is neighbor, we are told, but one in a higher degree than the other—and therefore entitled to our love in a corresponding degree. "These degrees are degrees of successive order, in which what is prior or superior is to be *preferred* to what is posterior or inferior."—(*Ib.*) Therefore "the kingdom of the Lord," according to the order in which it stands in the above enumeration, is more our neighbor than "the church," and consequently is to be loved in a superior degree. But what is the precise distinction between the church and the kingdom of the Lord? What is the distinction clearly intended by Swedenborg? It is amusing—or would be if it were not melancholy—to see how this question has sometimes been answered by New-Churchmen, who are unwilling to admit the existence of any invisible and real church, distinct from the visible and nominal. And I submit, that, so long as this distinction is ignored, it is impossible to give any rational and consistent answer to this question—any answer, I mean, that shall make Swedenborg consistent with himself. The distinction which our author makes, and meant that his readers should make, between the church and the kingdom of the Lord, is clearly the same that he makes between the spiritual and the celestial sense of Mother, and the same that I, in common with the great ma-

jority of Christians, make between the visible and the invisible, or the nominal and the real church. By "the church," in the connection referred to, he evidently means the nominal church, or the church as an organized and visible institution. This is clear from some of the language he employs; such as, "He, therefore, who from love *provides* for the church, loves" &c.—(*N. J. D.*, 94.) Such language would not be applicable to any other than the visible church. He who furnishes means for supporting the church as an organized institution—for supporting its ministry, its public worship, its missionary and other enterprises—may be said to *provide* for the church. A man "provides" for his family, for his country, for an army,—for something that has a visible and tangible existence. So, then, it must be the church as a visible institution, that Swedenborg speaks of a man's "providing" for.

And who are meant by the kingdom of the Lord, which, we are told, "is the neighbor in a still higher degree" than the church? Let Swedenborg himself answer. "His kingdom consists of *all who are influenced by good*," no matter what their clime or creed. "Thus the kingdom of the Lord is good, with all its quality, in the aggregate; and when this is loved, the individuals who are in good are loved." —(*N. J. D.*, 95.) It is the Lord's invisible but *real* church—the very same that our author elsewhere (*T. C. R.*, 307) means by "the communion of saints"

or "the church dispersed throughout the whole world." Indeed, there can be no doubt on this point, since the identity of this true but invisible church with the kingdom of the Lord, is expressly declared in the *Arcana*, 7396,—where it is said: "This communion, or this church, *is the Lord's kingdom in the earth*, conjoined to the Lord's kingdom in the heavens." And in the True Christian Religion this identity is affirmed in language still more explicit: "The Lord's kingdom [on earth] includes the church dispersed throughout the whole earth, called the communion of saints." —(416.) And this again is in harmony with another passage, which says: "By father and mother, in the supreme sense, are understood the Lord and His Kingdom; by father is meant the Lord, and *by mother, His kingdom.*"—(*Ap. Ex.*, 375.) All the children of God, then—all the good and charitable *in* the various churches and *out of* them—constitute "the kingdom of the Lord." And this kingdom, which is the real Apocalyptic New Jerusalem, we are told, is our neighbor in a higher degree than the church visible (*N. J. D.*, 95); and therefore it "is to be *preferred*" —that is, to be loved with a deeper and more ardent affection.—(*Ib.*, 96.)

I submit, then, that the testimony of Swedenborg to the distinction made in my sermon between the nominal and the real church, is clear and indubitable. And the same high authority is equally clear and strong in support of the position, that the New

Jerusalem is the real church, including within its ample pale, not merely Swedenborgians or nominal New-Churchmen, but all who are in conjunction with the Lord and in fellowship with the angels, be their professions, creeds, or external church relations what they may.

But I shall be pointed to the great and pernicious falsities still held and taught by the various Christian denominations around us—such as the tripersonality of God, the vicarious atonement, justification by faith alone, and other kindred errors, whereby the first Christian church was corrupted, and finally destroyed or brought to its end. And I shall be asked, Do these falsities belong to the New Jerusalem? Has it not been declared by the pen of inspiration that nothing "which worketh abomination or *maketh a lie*" shall by any means enter into it? How, then, can any who are in these or kindred falsities, be in the New Church? Or, how can any be in this Church, who are not in the belief and acknowledgment of its heavenly doctrines?

It seems strange that such questions should ever arise in the minds of those who believe in the illumination and authority of Swedenborg. Yet I know that they do arise, and that they are often propounded with a confidence which betrays a conviction that it is difficult if not impossible to answer them. I would, therefore, respectfully refer all who ask such questions, to the answers which our illumined author himself

has given. For he tells us in many places that Christians may be professedly or nominally in many and great errors, and yet live the life of charity; and where this is the case, they are not really *in* the falsities they profess; or their falsities are accepted of the Lord as truths, for they are not falses of evil, which are the only real falses of hell. Thus he says: "All doctrinals whatsoever, if so be they are derived from the Word, are accepted of the Lord, provided that the person who is principled therein be in the life of charity."—(*A. C.*, 8452.) "When the end is to do good, in this case, they [falses] are regarded by the Lord and in heaven, *not* as falses, but as bearing a resemblance to the truth, and according to the quality of innocence, are accepted as truths."—(*Ib.*, 7887.) "Falses which are derived from evil, are the real falses which are from hell."—(*A. E.*, 867.) "The false not from evil, but from ignorance of the truth, is *not* the false" *A. C.*, 6784), and is not so regarded by the Lord or the angels. "The falses which are not from evil, in the external form indeed are falses, but not in the internal; for there are falses given with those who are in the good of life, but interiorly in those falses there is good, which causes the evil of the false to be removed; hence that false before the angels does not appear as the false, but as a species of truth."—(*Ib.* 10,648.)

Now, can there be any reasonable doubt that there is, at this day, a large multitude belonging to the

churches in which great falsities are professed and taught, whose hearts are nevertheless so imbued with Christian charity, that the falses which they profess are not regarded by the Lord or the angels as falses? All such, then, are really and *at heart* in the truth. They, therefore, belong to the New Jerusalem, whatever be their creed or outward church fellowship. It may be said that this is mere inference. But is it not, I ask, a legitimate and necessary inference? Is it not a conclusion that accords with the general tenor and scope of our author's teachings? But there is no need of resting upon mere inference in this case. We have Swedenborg's own explicit declaration that there are people in Christendom, who, although professing various false doctrines, yet belong to the church of the New Jerusalem because of the good of life in which they are principled. Take his explanation of "the seven churches which are in Asia." These churches, he tells us, signify "the New Church upon earth, which is the New Jerusalem descending from the Lord out of the New Heaven. . . . which in itself is one, but various according to reception." And after comparing the varieties in this church "to the various jewels in the crown of a king," and "to the various members and organs in a perfect body," he adds, as if for the express purpose of teaching the comprehensive and universal character of the New Jerusalem, and that its variety adds to its perfection: "The perfection of every form consists in various

things being suitably disposed in their order: hence it is, that the universal New Church is described, as to its various particulars, by the seven churches, in what follows."—(*A. R.*, 66.)

Now, note the different classes of persons that constitute this "universal New Chureh." Note, especially, their various doctrines, and the *false* doctrines of various kinds which are *professed* by a large proportion of them. Among them, are "those who primarily respect truths of doctrine and not good of life"; "those who are in good as to life, but in falses as to doctrine"; "those who place the all of the church in good works, and not anything in truths of doctrine"; "those who are in faith separate from charity," yet "know a few things concerning charity"—persons who "have not themselves falsified truths, but have given credit to those who have done so, because their falsities appeared like truths"; "those who are in dead worship, or in worship which is without the good of charity and without the truths of faith," yet among whom "are *some* who have life in their worship (see *A. E.*, 112, 163, '4, '5, '6, 227, '33). In one of the paragraphs here referred to (227), we are told that "the *greater part*" of those who *profess* the doctrine of faith alone, "believe no otherwise than that faith alone is to think concerning God and salvation, *and how they ought to live;* and that justification is to live before God." And it is further added, that "there are *very few*" among those who

profess faith alone, who live from, or in accordance with that doctrine.

And so we find in tnese "seven churches" in Asia, according to Swedenborg's unfolding of the internal sense, persons professing various errors of doctrine, and *some* professing errors of the most pernicious character—errors which have contributed, more than all others, to darken and destroy the Christian church. Yet, spite of their errors of doctrine, many of these people have within them some portion of the Lord's own spirit and life, and therefore belong to His New Church. Their states are various as are the doctrines they profess, giving rise, therefore, to a corresponding variety in the New Church; for "*the universal New Church* is described, as to its various particulars, by these seven churches."

Nor is this the only passage in which our author has declared that those who are in ignorance of the truth, or who profess great errors, and yet live the life of charity, constitute a portion of the New Jerusalem. In the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse, mention is made of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, and the number sealed out of each tribe. And we are told that these twelve tribes signify all those who "constitute the Lord's *internal* Church"; also that they mean those "of the New Christian Heaven and the New Church, who will be in truths of doctrine derived from the good of love through the Word from the Lord." These, then, constitute the

internal of the New Church. But every church must have an *external* as well as an internal; and these cohere together, and form, not *two* churches but *one* church. The external church is not a different or a separate church from the internal, but is only a portion of one and the same church—yet a *necessary* portion, and one, without which it would not be a church. "A church," says Swedenborg, "in order to be a church, *must be* internal and external. . . . Where the internal church is, the external *must be also*, for the internal of the church cannot be separated from its external; and also where the external church is, the internal must be also."—(*A. C.*, 6587.) This is plain enough. And being told what class of persons constitute the *internal* of the New Church—viz., all who are "in truths of doctrine derived from the good of love through the Word from the Lord"—it is proper to inquire who constitute its *external;* for these, be it remembered, are not the less a part, and a *necessary* part, of the New Church. They belong to this church just as truly as do those who are in more interior states. Who, then, make the external of this New Heaven and New Church? Swedenborg has answered this question in language that cannot be misunderstood. The Apocalyptic divine, after reciting the number sealed out of each of the twelve tribes, proceeds (ch. vii., v. 9): "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number," &c.—which language as expounded by our illumined

author, "signifies all the rest who are not among the above recited, and yet are *in the Lord's New Heaven and New Church*, being those who compose the ultimate heaven and *the external church*, whose quality no one knows but the Lord alone.—(*A. R.*, 363.) And in the Apocalypse explained, the character of this "great multitude" is described in a general way. It includes, we are told, "all those who are in the good of life, according to their religion, in which there are *not* genuine truths;" while the twelve thousand sealed out of every tribe, and who constitute the *internal* of the New Church, denote "those who are of the church in which there *are* genuine truths." We are further told that the portion of this "great multitude" denoted by "people, and tongues," signifies "all who are in falsities from ignorance, and from various religions. . . . in the present case, those who are in falses of doctrine from ignorance; . . . for what is false is not imputed to any one who lives well according to the dogmas of his religion, inasmuch as it is not the fault of such an one if he does not know truths."—(*A. E.*, 452, '5.) Now the important fact, and one to which I desire to call special attention here, is this: that a large class of people, who, according to Swedenborg, *belong to the Lord's New Church* (for those who constitute the *external* of this church, are "numerous"—*A. C.*, 6587), are "in falses of doctrine from ignorance," but at the same time "are in the good of life." And who are those

good people who are in falses of doctrine," and where are they? Will you favor me with your opinion on this subject, Mr. Editor? Swedenborg declares most explicitly that they are "*in the Lord's New Church*," though they compose the external of this church. But are they in our *nominal* New Church? Are they all Swedenborgians? Surely not, unless you admit that Swedenborgians are "in falses of doctrine from ignorance." And the question would even then arise, Where is that "great multitude," or that "numerous" class of persons who constitute the external of the New Church? Are they to be found in our New Church organizations? If not, where then? My own opinion is, that very many of them, at least, are to be found in the various Christian organizations around us, which embrace a multitude of pious and excellent people, though in falses of doctrine from ignorance or from erroneous instruction.

I might quote other passages from Swedenborg, in harmony with those already cited. But it seems hardly necessary. If the inference I have drawn from those referred to, is to be set aside or questioned, I doubt whether the multiplication of extracts or references would serve any valuable purpose. But I ask you, Mr. Editor, in all sincerity and earnestness, whether the doctrine of my sermon, as to the extent and whereabout of the Lord's New Church, and the maternal claims upon us of those Christian organizations which we are in the habit of designating as

"the Old Church," be not fully sustained by the teachings of Swedenborg? If you think not, you will oblige me by pointing out the fallacy or imperfection in my argument, or by showing precisely what there is in my sermon which you think unsupported by the teachings of our author.

And that you may see that I am not alone in my "theological eccentricity" or "perversity," and therefore deserve not to be singled out and spoken of as in your foot-note to my sermon, I will here quote a paragraph from a report rendered a few years ago by the "Committee of Ministers of the Massachusetts Association of the New Jerusalem," with the President of the General Convention, Rev. Thomas Worcester, D. D., at their head. That Committee say:

"There is a great multitude who are reckoned among the members of the former church [i. e., the Old Church], but who have no affection for its doctrines, and therefore no internal or enduring faith in them; but their effort is to live well; they act from religious principles; they shun evils as sins against God; they reverence and love the Scriptures; and read them with affection, with faith, and with a desire to conform to the instruction which is there given them; they attend upon religious ordinances, and conscientiously perform all the duties of life. . . . Such persons are most certainly in the kingdom of God; and they are to be regarded as belonging to the New Church, and as making an important part of of it."—(See *New Jerusalem Magazine* for July, 1847, p. 480.)

Now, I do not know as Dr. Worcester or any other member of that "Committee of Ministers," would at this time subscribe to the doctrine or view contained in the above paragraph. Probably he would not. But I do know that the view here put forth has never been formally repudiated by either of those brethren. And I ask you, Mr. Editor, if there be anything in my sermon, which does not follow as a legitimate and necessary conclusion from the teaching of this paragraph? If not, then what should shield Dr. Worcester and his associates from the charge of "theological eccentricity if not perversity" —*unless* it be a decided change of opinion in those gentlemen since 1847? Are they not as amenable to this charge as myself?

You say in your foot-note, "We cannot consent to the opinion that there is no *visible* distinction to be made between the Old and the New." I believe I have never expressed any such opinion. Certainly I have not intended to do so. I do not object to a separate and distinct church organization, based upon the doctrines revealed through Swedenborg. This, in some places, perhaps, is unavoidable. But may we not have a separate organization based upon the new doctrines, without, at the same time, unchurching all other Christians, or claiming that we alone are the Lord's true church to the exclusion of all others? May we not have a separate church organization, without including within it *all* the Lord's people?

Nay, how are we to guard against the ingress into our organization of some who are *not* the Lord's people, unless we are able to penetrate the inmost recesses of the hearts of others? The only visible distinction that I am able to recognize between the Old and the New, viewed as separate church organizations, is the distinction based solely upon doctrines—and this I *do* recognize. What else but *doctrine* distinguishes our communion from others that bear the Christian name? An ecclesiastical organization, therefore, which is distinguished from others solely by its doctrine, is not necessarily and on account of its purer doctrine, nearer to the Lord, or more a true church than those others. For we are expressly taught by Swedenborg, that "doctrinals alone *do not serve to distinguish* churches before the Lord."—(*A. C.*, 1799.) And that this distinction of names among Christians, arising solely from doctrinals, "would never have taken place if the members of the church had made love to the Lord and charity toward their neighbor the principal of faith."—(*Ib.*) It would seem, then, not to be in accordance with the spirit or teachings of the New Jerusalem, to seek to perpetuate on earth a distinction among churches such as the Lord does not recognize. Setting aside, then, all merely outward, doctrinal, or nominal distinctions, I think the New and the Old have been intermingled here on earth ever since the time of the Last Judgment. I doubt if either is to be found pure among any body of peo-

ple at the present day. The New is everywhere interpenetrating, reforming, and vitalizing the Old. It reveals itself in the new spirit and life as well as in the new and higher truths that are continually flowing into the literature of our times, into science, into art, into politics, into all social, industrial, educational, philanthropic, and religious institutions. Slowly, but surely, the Lord is fulfilling that great prediction, "Behold I make all things new." Look at Sweden. Hear what our estimable brother Kahl says of the manner in which the New Church is descending there, in his interesting letter published in the August number of your magazine. "As Swedenborg," he says, "did not separate himself from the Swedish national church, his admirers and friends after him in his country have, also, even to our days, embraced the principle of non-secession, and rested tranquil in the external position of the Old Church, respecting its order as the basis of religious fellowship. Their principal and almost only endeavor has been to examine, amend, and improve the internal and essential parts of the church, the articles of faith, and the moral doctrines." And what has been the result? Our Swedish brother himself shall answer; "To high and low, at the Court, in the universities, and almost throughout the whole country they [i. e., Swedenborg's writings] have in a friendly manner been introduced." "Thus, we find a number of persons in all classes of the people, among peasants, tradesmen,

clergymen, noblemen, even princes and kings, who have read and admired Swedenborg's theological works." "Almost every year, some little book at least of this good stamp [defending the doctrines of the New Jerusalem] has appeared in the book trade. It seems as if the old symbolico-Lutheran anathemas, have forever been silenced. A milder genius has from day to day begun to prevail in our national church. Even the orthodox, so zealous before, have been more favorably affected toward the New Jerusalem and its heavenly doctrine. . . They now regard the friends of Swedenborg rather as confederates or allies than as antagonists, and suffer them, uncensured and unreproached, to write and preach according to their conscience." The doctrinal tenets of the national church have been greatly modified. "For this alteration in theological sentiments,' continues our brother, "our thanks are due to the Divine Providence. It is, no doubt, a very good omen. It proves that a new religious age is about to begin even in Sweden." *About* to begin! Why does it not prove that a new religious age *has already* begun there? "The more enlightened among our theologians do not preach a heartless and dead dogmatism, or 'faith alone.' On the contrary, they agree with Swedenborg, that love to the Lord, and charity toward our neighbor, are the essentials on 'which hangs all the law, and concerning which all the prophets speak.' They appear to have read and laid very much to their hearts the instruc-

tion of our great author" in *Arcana Cœlestia*, section 1799, which teaches the supreme importance of charity, and inculcates the broadest Christian catholicity."

Such are some of the results of "the principle of non-secession" from the Swedish national church, early embraced by the readers of Swedenborg in that kingdom. And what happier consequences have resulted from the opposite principle in other countries? There is more of the *nominal* New Church—vastly more New Church *societies* in England or America than in Sweden. But can we say with equal confidence that there is, after all, *more of the New Church?* Taking the above statements of your Swedish correspondent as a basis of calculation, is it fair to conclude that there is in Sweden less knowledge or belief of the heavenly doctrines, less of heaven-born charity, less of the catholic spirit of the New Jerusalem, than in England or America, in proportion to population? To my mind, the evidence is clearly the other way. I believe the light and warmth of the New Jerusalem are to-day being diffused more widely throughout the kingdom of Sweden, than in either of those other countries—and this, too, chiefly because of "the principle of non-secession," referred to. I believe that the New Church is descending more rapidly, and that there is now more of it in proportion to population, in Sweden than in either England or America. And it was clearly Swedenborg's own idea that the New

would, in precisely the way we see it in Sweden, descend into, and for a long time remain mixed up with, the Old. How else shall we interpret what he says about the woman fleeing into the wildnerness, where she hath a place prepared of God, &c.? He tells us (*Ap. Ex.*, 764) that this signifies, "that the church, which is called the New Jerusalem, is to tarry among those who are in the doctrine of faith separate from charity, while it grows to the full, until provision is made for its reception among greater numbers." He also says that a large number "in the same church" —that is, in what we commonly hear called the Old Church—"who live the life of faith, which is charity, are not dragons *although among* them; for they know no otherwise than . . . . that the faith which justifies and saves, is to believe those things which are in the Word and do them." Here our author teaches that it is according to divine order—agreeable to a divine prediction—that the New Church should tarry with the Old "while it grows to the full." And what he means by this "tarrying" becomes plain when he says there are those professing the doctrine of faith alone, who yet "live the life of charity," and who "are *not* dragons, although *among* them." Observe, too, that these people are of "the church *which is called the New Jerusalem.*" In view of such teaching, can there be any doubt as to the correctness of what is taught in my sermon about our spiritual mother?

But I fear you may be wearied with the length of my article; therefore I here lay down my pen.

In conclusion, I would again express my profound conviction of the great practical importance of obtaining correct views of the question here discussed. I hope I have treated the subject in such a manner that the truth will not suffer damage by aught that I have written. I hope that I have said nothing which the Master or any of His humble followers will disapprove. And although it is for uttering such things as I have here written, and others of a kindred character—things which appear to my own mind as clear as the noon-day sun—that my name has been "cast out as evil" on this side the water, and the organs of the nominal New Church in our country been completely closed against me, I yet believe, from the kindness and courtesy hitherto extended me by your Magazine, that I shall not be denied a hearing on this subject through the columns of the *Intellectual*. And if I am in error on the subject here discussed, I trust you, Mr. Editor, or some other friend, will make the error plain. No one would feel more thankful than myself for its frank and full exposure. But if I am *not* in error—if my views are sustained by the teachings of Swedenborg—then, I submit, your periodical should freely admit the fact. Whatever change in our New Church ecclesiasticism, or in our attitude and bearing toward other Christians, the admission

may seem to necessitate, fidelity to the Master as well as loyalty to the truth, requires that it be frankly made.

B. F. BARRETT.

ORANGE, *Sept.* 6, 1862.

CHAPTER II.

REVIEW OF DR. WORCESTER'S LAST REPORT ON BAPTISM.*

[The following Review was originally intended for the pages of *The Swedenborgian*, being written just before the discontinuance of that Magazine. It was prepared with very considerable care, and is believed to contain an argument against the main position of Dr. Worcester's Report, of sufficient force to merit the attention of all who claim to belong to the church of the New Jerusalem.

It is much to be regretted, that the columns of the New Church journals are not open to the discussion of subjects of this character. Yet such is the fact—for no question can be properly *discussed*, where the parties who enter into the discussion are forced to speak all on one side. In not one of the recognized organs of the New

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* Report of the Committee of Ministers upon the Memorials on Baptism, presented to, and adopted by, the General Convention of the New Church in the United States at its session in 1855, and signed "Thomas Worcester, Chairman." (*See Journal of Proceedings for* 1855, p. 163.)

Church could this article find admission. Writers, who will maintain the necessity of re-baptism, or the inefficacy and invalidity of all baptism administered outside of our Swedenborgian communion—be their reasons ever so futile or their logic ever so defective—are allowed full freedom in the organs aforesaid; but those who entertain a different opinion—no matter how strong their convictions or how forcible the arguments in support of them—are not allowed equal liberty. They are, therefore, compelled either to keep silence, or to seek some other channel of communication with their brethren. This, I say, is much to be regretted. It is, I submit, an unwise and illiberal policy. It is not the best way I think, either to maintain harmony and good feeling among brethren, or to advance the interests of divine truth, or to secure the triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom. It is always liable to force articles of this character upon the attention of some persons who cannot be supposed either to profit by them, or to feel much interest in them; and who, had the articles been permitted to circulate through the legitimate channels, might never have had their attention called to them. And in addition to this it affords an exemplification, not of the generous freedom, the large toleration, and beautiful catholicity of the New Church, but of qualities and characteristics quite the opposite. But believing, as I do, that the publication of this Review in these pages will be

productive of more good than harm—regretting, at the same time, that there exists no recognized New Church organ into whose columns it could be admitted—I hesitate not to give it a publicity beyond what I had originally intended, and one which, under different circumstances, it certainly would not have received.

In one or two instances there will he found in this Review substantially the same ideas, and identically the same quotations from Swedenborg, as are found in an earlier part of this volume. But as the passages and extracts referred to could not be omitted without affecting the completeness and weakening the force of the article, they have been suffered to stand unaltered.]

REVIEW, ETC.

THIS Report ought to have been reviewed at the time it was published. But we trust it is not yet too late to point out what are believed to be its erroneous views and hurtful tendencies, nor to hope for a rejection, by all sincere and truth-loving minds, of its unauthorized and lame conclusions. Possibly an expose of its argument and conclusions may now find more willing and candid listeners, than it would have found six years ago. If so, there wil be no cause for regret that the review has been so long delayed. Let us, then, in the love of truth for its own sake, and in the

spirit of Christian candor, subject this Report to a patient and thorough examination.

The immediate occasion of the Report, as the Record shows, was the presentation to the General Convention of 1854, of several memorials from New-Churchmen in different parts of the country, all remonstrating against a certain section in the Convention's Constitution, and praying for such alteration of the same as would betray a willingness, on the part of that body, to recognize the validity of baptism administered in other Christian communions than our own, or by other hands than those of a professed New Church minister. The Report was drawn up by the President of the Convention, Dr. T. Worcester—as were also the report of the Ordaining Ministers on the same subject printed in the Journal of 1839, and the still more lengthy report read before the Convention of 1847, a review of which appeared in the "Swedenborgian" for March and April, 1860. And it is worthy of remark—although the circumstance is not one on which we care to dwell—that the different views of Baptism put forth in these reports, show that their author had changed his opinion on the subject more than once within the space of a very few years. This, indeed, is no evidence against the correctness of the conclusion reached in the Report before us. But, seeing that this conclusion is substantially the same as that arrived at in the report of 1839, which the author himself subsequently saw reasons for distrust-

ing, we ought, before accepting it, to subject it to a critical examination.

The Report commences by saying: "Your Committee have paid much attention to this subject, and have collected and arranged a large mass of materials upon it; but they have concluded to present merely the following views for your consideration." Then, after stating the three uses of Baptism, as explained in the "True Christian Religion," and offering a few brief remarks upon each, it proceeds:

"Having now these views of the uses of baptism, we are ready to answer the question as to what church Swedenborg refers to when he says that the first use of baptism is introduction into the church. We answer that he refers to a church that leads those who come into it into a knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ; and inasmuch as the New Church performs this use, and no other church performs it, therefore he refers to the New Church.

"Some, however, have entertained the idea that Swedenborg referred to all churches that call themselves Christian churches. We do not think it possible that this can be his meaning; first, because he teaches in this very chapter as well as in all other parts of his works, that the old church, with all its branches, has come to its end; and he is here giving instruction to the New Church, which is to take the place of the old; it does not seem possible, therefore, that, when he is speaking of the uses of introduction into the church, he should refer to the old as well as the new. It seems impossible that he should mean to teach that introduction into the old church is attended by the same benefits as introduction into the new.

"Secondly: It is still more manifest that this could not be his meaning, because the old church came to an end, for the reason that it was not in the true knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ; and consequently it could not bring others into that knowledge and acknowledgment. It would be absurd, it would be insane, for him to recommend that we should go to a certain place for a thing, when he knew that the thing was not there. So it would be insane for him to send us to a thousand places for a certain thing, when he knew that it was in one of those places, and not in the nine hundred and ninety-nine, and when he could have used the proper words to designate the place, as well as any other words.

"Thirdly: This cannot be his meaning, because he knew that the old church had come to an end. He had himself been the principal medium by which its falsities were exposed; he had seen and shown that they did not know and acknowledge the Lord, and that they did not introduce others into that knowledge and acknowledgment,—or, in other words, that they were not a church, and did not perform the uses of a church.

"Fourthly: This cannot be his meaning, because he knew that a New Church was established; because he was the principal medium by which its doctrines were revealed; because he knew that this church was in the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it would lead others into that knowledge and acknowledgment,—or, in other words, he knew that it was a church, and that it would perform the uses of a church."—(*Journal* for 1855, p. 106.)

And in remarking upon the three uses of Baptism mentioned by Swedenborg, the Report says:

"These uses the Lord assigns unto men to perform, that they may transmit His blessings from one generation to another. If any one knows, acknowledges, and follows the Lord Jesus Christ, he becomes a church in the least form; and, if many do this, they become a church in a larger form; and when they receive others into their connection, and aid them in coming into this knowledge, acknowledgment, and life, then they are performing the uses of a church. And Baptism is made to be the means of introduction, because it is a representative of the whole work that is to be done afterward."

Let us now see if we cannot disentangle this subject from the web of sophistry, which is here rather ingeniously woven around it. For this purpose, let us first look at the assumptions of the Report in the light of reason and probability, and consider what must be their legitimate effect upon those who accept its conclusions; and then we will compare its teachings with those of the authorized writings of the New Church.

It is assumed throughout the Report—and this, we submit, is the error that underlies and vitiates all its conclusions—that the Lord's true church is a visible or known body of people; that is, a body whose members are known to men;—whose boundaries are determined primarily by the *doctrines* it receives and teaches; whose limits, therefore, are as sharply defined as those of the Romish hierarchy or a rail-

road corporation. The body holding the true doctrine (this is the shape the argument takes), is the church; and all those who accept the doctrine, and come in through the authorized gate of baptism, whose keys are supposed to be held exclusively by this body, of course belong to the church. All others are out of the church.

And inasmuch as the doctrines taught by Swedenborg are true, having been revealed from God out of heaven, therefore the receivers of these doctrines, or that body of people popularly known as Swedenborgians, are now the true church of the Lord. And none others are to be reckoned as belonging to the church, or as having any authority to teach, or baptize, or perform any of the uses of a church.

It is further assumed in this Report, that, when Swedenborg speaks of Baptism as a sign of introduction into the Christian church, he means by "the Christian Church" none but Swedenborgians, or the receivers of the doctrines taught by himself. It is assumed that none others are in the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore none others are able to lead people to this knowledge and acknowledgment:—and, of course, none others are to be regarded as Christians. None others *are* Christians in the sense in which Swedenborg employs the term. All other churches "that call themselves Christian churches," have no right to the name. They are not such in reality. They, in the aggregate, are "the old church" that is now dead

and consummated, being quite forsaken of Him whose presence and indwelling can alone impart life. To quote Dr. Worcester's own words when speaking of this church on another occasion:

"Inasmuch as it was a church, and had authority to baptize and perform the other duties of a church, because He [the Lord] *was with it*, therefore, since *He has left it, it has no authority or power to baptize or to perform any other church duty*."—(See *New Jerusalem Magazine*, vol. xii., p. 379.)

In short, it is assumed in the Report, that we Swedenborgians (whom alone it includes under the designation of "New Church") are the Lord's peculiar people: that the Lord is with us in a peculiar sense, and in a pre-eminent degree; that we alone are worthy to bear the Christian name; that we alone are Christ's true followers upon earth; and, as such, are alone capable of "leading others into a knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ, and into a life corresponding to His life." In short, that we are *the* church, and are alone capable of performing the uses of a church; and that the holy rite of Baptism when administered in other Christian communions, or by other hands than ours, is without its proper efficacy or validity—in a word, *is not Christian* baptism.

And these, be it observed, are not inferences wrung from the Report by any violent wresting of its meaning, but such as are irresistibly forced upon us. And

however we may shrink from them when stated in this bald form, it cannot be denied that, stripped of its disguises, it means just what we have here stated. And it is drawn up, too, with the obvious intention of making Swedenborg appear to stand sponsor for all this, and no doubt with the honest belief that such are the legitimate inferences from his writings.

Now, when we consider the real nature of these assumptions—the extraordinary presumption and lack of true humility involved in them—and when we consider further that they are views seriously put forth by the Convention's "committee of ministers," with the President at their head—that they have been cherished by the great body of the Convention, including all its leading minds, for more than a quarter of a century—when we consider all this, need we wonder at the existing state of the nominal New Church in our country—a state over which there is so little cause for rejoicing? Need we wonder at the sad lack of humility, piety, and heavenly charity among us? How is it possible for any people long to cherish sentiments like those involved in this Report, without the fountains of heavenly life becoming dry within them, and a state of manifest alienation from God and from each other supervening. Humility is the parent of all other virtues—the only soil in which the graces of heaven can live and thrive; and it is no less essential to associated bodies of men than to individuals. No class of people can lift

themselves, even in thought, above their neighbors, and long indulge the conceit that they are holier than others, without suffering spiritual deterioration, if not decay; just as no individual can grow in grace while harboring the thought of his own superiority in the sight of Heaven, and inwardly "standing by himself," and thanking God that he is not as other men. Self-exaltation, with societies as with individuals, can only result in spiritual abasement. And I believe we shall look in vain for any material improvement in the condition of the nominal New Church, until the mischievous and long-cherished assumptions of this Report, are seen, acknowledged, and religiously shunned, as errors originating in evil and conducting only to evil.

Is it necessary to *prove* that they are mere assumptions? Look at them in the light of reason and common sense and common observation. Look at that small body of Christians commonly known as "the New Church." Look at their character as revealed in the common walks of every-day life—for *life*, not *doctrine*, constitutes the church. Look at them under the most favorable aspect you can, and with reference to all the Christian graces. Look at their piety, their charity, their zeal, their humility, their disinterestedness, their brotherly love, their self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of humanity. Look at them fairly and impartially, and with the disposition to do them the fullest justice. Then look at the

vast multitude of Christians outside of our nominal New Church, and at what they are doing for the Master's cause. Look at the Christ-like spirit and temper of the thousands among them distinguished for their serene faith, their heavenly charity, their lofty purpose, their humble trust, their heroic self-denial and self-sacrifice for the good of others. Mark how they revere and study the Holy Scripture; how earnestly they strive to obey its precepts; how meekly they accept life's sternest trials; how fearful they are of doing wrong; how loyal to every dictate of duty; and how freely and affectionately they devote themselves to the upbuilding of the Redeemer's kingdom. Who, of any moral discernment, will say there *are* no such people outside of our Swedenborgian communion? Dr. Worcester himself would hardly say this,—or would not have said it fifteen years ago. For about that time he admitted that "there is a *great multitude*" of such persons; and, describing their character, he said: "Their effort is to live well; they act from religious principle; they shun evils as sins against God; they reverence and love the Scriptures; and read them with affection, with faith, and with a desire to conform to the instruction which is there given them; they attend upon religious ordinances, and conscientiously perform all the duties of life."* Most obvious and undeniable is all this.

* Report on Baptism published in the Convention's Journal of Proceedings, July 1847, and drawn up by Thomas Worcester,—p. 480.

But what conclusions are we brought to by the doctrine of this last Report from the Doctor's pen? Why, that these excellent people, who "reverence and love the Scriptures," who "shun evils as sins against God," and "conscientiously perform all the duties of life," although they "*call themselves* Christians," *are not* such in reality; they are not in "the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ"; they constitute no part of that body which Swedenborg intended to designate as "the Christian Church"! They all belong to that "old church," which has "come to its end"—which is dead and consummated—and which, because it has been left of the Lord, has no longer authority to teach or baptize in his name, and is incapable of performing any of the uses of a church! Yet it is this same, old, dead and consummated church, which has had the care and instruction of this "great multitude" of good people from their earliest infancy; which has taught them "to live well" and to "act from religious principle"; which has led them to "reverence and love the Scriptures," and "to shun evils as sins against God"; which has constrained them to "attend upon religious ordinances"; and has so far built them up into the stature of perfect manhood, that they "conscientiously perform all the duties of life"! Now if a church that only *calls* itself such, but is no church in reality, or is only a dead and God-forsaken church, can do all this, it may well be asked what more or

better can be done by a true and living church? One of the highest uses that any church can perform, is, to lead those who enter it "to shun evils as sins against God." What, then, can be more unjust or preposterous than to deny to those who do this the right to be considered *Christians*, or to administer the Christian ordinances! And the pretense that Swedenborg justifies such denial, is scarcely less than a gross libel of the teachings of that great, wise, and truly catholic man.

Look at this subject, then, in the light of known and admitted facts. Is it reasonable to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, at this day, has come into the hearts of, and steadfastly abides with, us Swedenborgians in any such special and peculiar sense, as entitles us to be considered "the Christian Church," to the exclusion of all others? Is it reasonable to believe that we alone have an *experimental knowledge of Christ* (for this is the only knowledge of Him that is worth mentioning), and alone are competent to lead others to Him, or to impart to them this same knowledge? Is it reasonable to believe that we possess such a complete monopoly of all the Christian graces, as to give us an exclusive title to the name of Christians, or to warrant us in assuming to ourselves the exclusive right to administer the Christian ordinances? Is there such an obvious superiority of our people, as to all that relates to the spirit and temper of Christ, above other Christians, as to justify any such belief?

On the contrary, is not a moment's reflection, in the light of common sense and common observation, sufficient to prove the superlative folly and arrogance, as well as the utter falsity, of such an assumption? The bare thought of claiming to ourselves the exclusive name and prerogatives of the Church of Christ—to say nothing of the grave attempt to prove this claim just—ought alone to be sufficient evidence of the strange delusion under which we have fallen. Surely the spirit which could suggest such a thought must be the opposite of that which prompted the prayer of the poor publican. The indwelling and operation of Christ's spirit in the hearts of His people (which alone can constitute them His true and living church) never leads them to magnify themselves above others, much less to attempt to prove argumentatively that they are His people to the exclusion of all others.

And we shall find that the conclusions of this Report are as contrary to the teachings of Swedenborg as they are to reason and well-known facts. To glance at only a few passages—not a hundredth part of what might be cited—which are deemed conclusive on this point.

This authority tells us that "Baptism is a sign that the persons baptized are of the Christian Church;" that it is a "sign," and "*only* a sign of introduction into the church." This, we are told, is the first use of Baptism. Now, what does Swedenborg mean by "the Christian church"? for this is the

main point on which the whole discussion hinges. The author of the Report insists that he means us Swedenborgians *only*, or those who accept the doctrines of the New Jerusalem as revealed through the Swedish Seer, and are, therefore, commonly known as the New Church, or Swedenborgians; and that any other supposition would involve an absurdity—nay, would imply insanity on the part of Swedenborg. We, on the contrary, insist that he means by "the Christian church," all who acknowledge the Christian religion, without any reference whatever to their distinctive doctrinal tenets, or to *how they understand* Christianity. For he says: "Not only infants are baptized, but likewise all foreign proselytes converted to the Christian religion, whether they be young or old, and this before they have been instructed, if they do but confess themselves desirous of embracing Christianity, into which they are inaugurated by baptism."—(*T. C. R.*, 677.) Inaugurated into what? Into *Swedenborgianism*, or any other *ism*?—into any peculiar understanding, or special interpretation of the Christian religion? By no means; but into *Christianity;* into faith in Christ as the great Teacher, Redeemer, and Saviour of the world. Baptism is a *Christian*, not a *sectarian* ordinance. It is often declared by Swedenborg to be "the *Christian* sign;"—not a sign to distinguish one class of Christians from another, but to distinguish Christians in general from people of all other religions. Accordingly, in giving us the reason

why baptism inserts the subjects of it among Christians in the spiritual world, he says it is "because different people and nations are in that world distinctly placed according to their religious principles; Christians are in the middle, Mahometans round about them, idolaters, of various kinds, behind them, and Jews at the sides."—(*T. C. R.*, 678.) But if only Swedenborgians are here meant by Christians, then where are the millions in Christendom, who are not professedly of the New Church, located? Is there no place provided for them in the spiritual world? Or are they probably reckoned among Mahometans, idolaters, or Jews? Then look at the expression, "all foreign proselytes converted to the Christian religion." Could Swedenborg, in this instance, have meant by "the Christian religion" simply *his own exposition* of that religion? And could he have meant by "all foreign proselytes," as well those converted to the faith of the New Church *from other Christian denominations*, as from Jews, Mahometans, or Pagans? Think of his designating converts from Lutherans, Methodists, or Episcopalians, as "foreign proselytes!" And when any of these sects receive the doctrines of the New Church, think of his speaking of their being "converted to the *Christian* religion!" Verily, if such were his meaning, "it would be absurd, it would be insane" for him to employ language in a sense so foreign to its established usage, and then expect his readers to understand him.

And further on, in the same chapter, Swedenborg tells us that "baptism is a sign in the spiritual world that the person baptized is of a Christian community."—(*Ib.*, 680.) Now, could he have meant by "a Christian community" simply a Swedenborgian or New Church community, as the author of this Report would have us believe? The supposition is preposterous. Besides, he tells us in the very next sentence, that, in the other world, "every one is inserted into societies and congregations *according to the quality* of Christianity either within him or without him"—thus clearly recognizing different *kinds* or *qualities* of Christianity. If he had meant to embrace, under the term "Christianity," merely our New Church or Swedenborgian variety, and nothing more, would he have used an expression so clearly indicative of various qualities of this one religion? To believe this, would be to impute to him something which we have never yet heard laid to his charge—to wit: an exceedingly careless and loose way of employing language.

Again: We are taught that "the second use of Baptism, which is, to know the Lord, the Redeemer, and Saviour Jesus Christ, inseparably attends the first, which is introduction into the Christian Church and insertion among Christians in the spiritual world." And "to bear the name of a Christian, that is, to be considered as belonging to Christ, and yet not to acknowledge Him and follow Him, which

consists in living according to His commandments, is a vain and empty thing, like a shadow, or smoke, or a picture dyed black." Then, after quoting a number of passages from the Word to show what the name of the Lord Jesus Christ signifies, our author adds: "How plain is it to see, that in these passages, the name of the Lord means not only His name, but an acknowledgment of Him as the Redeemer and Saviour, attended with obedience to Him, and at length with faith in Him. . . . . In the spiritual world every one is named according to his quality; so that the name of Christian given to any one means his quality as possessing faith in Christ and charity toward his neighbor from Christ."—(*T. C. R.*, 681,'2.) And in this same paragraph it is further said, that, to follow Christ, and thereby to deserve or truly receive the name of Christian, is "to live according to the truths of His Word"—"to hear His voice, that is, to obey His commands." Now, will any intelligent New-Churchman maintain that none but Swedenborgians are "to be considered as belonging to Christ"?—that none others "acknowledge Him as the Redeemer and Saviour"?—that none others "obey His commandments" or "live according to the truths of His Word"?—that none others "possess faith in Christ and charity toward the neighbor from Christ"? Yet this—preposterous as it is, and involving, as it seems to, such superlative arrogance

and presumption on the part of those who maintain it—is the extraordinary position of the Report under consideration;—a position which we cannot but regard as no less repugnant to reason and facts, than it is to the spirit and temper of heaven. And it is equally inconsistent with what the author of this Report had himself said only a few years before. (See *New Jerusalem Magazine*, vol. xx., p. 480.)

But Swedenborg in his chapter on Baptism, uses language still more conclusive as to what he meant by "the Christian Church." He tells us who are true Christians—and these, most assuredly, belong to the Christian church. Thus he says: "A true Christian knows and acknowledges the Lord the Redeemer Jesus Christ, who, as He is the Redeemer, is also the Regenerator. . . . A Christian is in possession of the Word, where the means of regeneration stand fully described, and are declared to be faith in the Lord and charity toward our neighbor." Now, are we to understand that none but those who accept *the spiritual sense* of the Word as unfolded by the science of correspondences, are "*in possession* of the Word"?—that none others "know and acknowledge the Lord the Redeemer Jesus Christ"?—that none others have "faith in the Lord and charity toward our neighbor"? *Is this true* as a matter of fact? And could this have been Swedenborg's meaning? Is it a fair and reasonable interpretation of his language? Can his words be understood in this way,

without a violent wresting of their plain and obvious import? If not, then the teaching of this Report is not to be accepted. Then its argument is fallacious, and its conclusions unauthorized. Then others, beside Swedenborgians, are to be accounted "Christians" and as belonging to the "Christian Church"—for the very good reason that others have the Word, through the medium of which they have been brought to a knowledge of "the Lord the Redeemer Jesus Christ."

Still further—and in perfect agreement with the foregoing—we are taught, "That there is only one true faith, and that is in the Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ; and that it is with those who believe Him to be the Son of God, the God of heaven and earth, and one with the Father."—(*T. C. R.*, 379.) And at the close of the same paragraph it is added: "This first character of faith that the Lord is the Son of the living God, is like the morning star to all those who enter into His church." Again, in n. 342 of the same work, it is said, "that every one who desires to be a *true* Christian, ought to believe that JESUS IS THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." These passages are explicit. And we find the first one quoted in the Report before us. And in the remarks following the quotation, we find these:

"And that the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is the foundation of the Christian Church, is manifest from what the Lord said when Peter testi-

fied that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God. . . . On this rock [the confession here made by Peter] he builds His church; for in all minds, where this perception and acknowledgment exist, he is present; in all such minds he can operate; from all such minds he can drive away the evil influences that come up from beneath; and into all such minds he can introduce the good influences that come down from above. The confession that He is the Son of God, is the rock upon which His kingdom is founded, and against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. . . A church that is founded upon that confession, is interiorly united with heaven, and co-operates with it."

This is plain Bible truth. But we marvel at the utter lack of coherence between the conclusions of this Report and the sentiments here expressed. For surely no one will pretend that Swedenborgians or the nominal New Church *alone*, are in the confession of Christ as "the Son of the living God"—a confession upon which all agree that the Christian church is built, and which involves what Swedenborg says, "is a primary truth, and as a diadem upon the head, and as a sceptre in the hand of the body of Christ." Is there, indeed, *any* professedly Christian church, in which Christ is *not* acknowledged as the Son of the living God? To say that most Christians do not understand this language precisely as we do, and therefore do not make this confession precisely after our fashion, is saying very little to the purpose. It

is sufficient to know that the confession and acknowledgment of multitudes among them are such, that the Divine Saviour can be present with them and operate upon their minds and hearts;—can drive from them the foul malignity of the hells, and impart unto them the quickening influences of heaven.

We confidently affirm, therefore—and feel ourselves abundantly sustained in the affirmation—that, when Swedenborg speaks of baptism as an introduction into the Christian church, he *does* "refer to all churches that call themselves Christian churches." We challenge the production of a single passage from all his writings, that proves, by implication even, the contrary of this. We hold it to be utterly impossible for any candid mind, not swayed by some foregone conclusion or wedded to some theory which it feels bound to maintain, to read, with attention, his chapter on baptism, and fail to see that he means by "Christians" and "the Christian Church," precisely what is generally understood by these terms; and that is, all who believe in Christ as the promised Messiah—"the Son of the living God"—and accept the Christian Scriptures as the revealed Word of God.

And further still: After discussing in order each of the three uses of Baptism, Swedenborg sums up as follows:

"The first use of baptism is, that a man may have the name of Christian; the second, following as a

consequence from the first, is, that he may know and acknowledge the Lord to be the Redeemer, Regenerator and Saviour; and the third is, that he may be regenerated by the Lord, and when this is effected he is redeemed and saved. As these three uses follow each other in order, and join with each other in the ultimate use, and consequently, in the idea of the angels, cohere together as a one, therefore, whenever baptism is performed, read in the Word, or named, the angels who are present understand not baptism, but regeneration."—*T. C. R.*, 685.

Now, if the conclusions of this Report are to be accepted, it may well be asked, Why did not Swedenborg say, "whenever baptism is performed *by Christians of the right stamp*"—"by those who understand the spiritual sense of the Word, or who accept the doctrines of the New Jerusalem as unfolded in my writings, the angels who are present understand not baptism, but regeneration"? Why was a term of such broad significance as "*whenever*" used by him, without some words in immediate connection therewith to limit its meaning, *if he had meant to limit it* in the manner and degree presumed in this Report? Why did he employ language which he must have known would be commonly understood as implying that angels are present at the administration of this ordinance, understanding it in its spiritual sense, and recognizing its complete validity *whenever* it is performed—that is, by Christians *of whatever name or creed—if* he had meant to teach what the author of

this Report believes he did? And why, especially—if such were his meaning and intention—did he afterward, in the very same chapter, speak of "the baptism at this day administered among Christians," as having all the significance and validity that it ever had, or ever can have? This chapter, it may be well to remember, was written some twelve years *after* "the old church had come to an end;" so that "the baptism *at this day*," of which he speaks, could have been none other than the baptism administered by those, who, according to the conclusions of this Report, "did not know and acknowledge the Lord," and therefore "were not a church." And, according to the Report, these people were not Christians; yet Swedenborg here calls them "Christians." Now, if this illumined writer, twelve years after the former church had come to its end, still recognized the people in Christendom as "Christians," and their baptism as Christian baptism—nowhere *hinting* at its inefficacy or invalidity—what right have we, a hundred years later, to deny to them the Christian name, or to call in question the validity of their baptism? Can we do this without justly exposing ourselves to the charge of singular presumption, and an attempt to be wise above what is written?

We say, therefore—confident that we have ample warrant for the assertion—that in all professedly Christian churches at the present day, there is some degree of knowledge and acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus

Christ—often a good degree of such knowledge and acknowledgment—enough at all times to entitle them to the name of Christian; but in no one of them, *not even that which claims to be the New Jerusalem*, can it be said that this knowledge and acknowledgment are full and perfect. In all of them there is somewhat of the spirit of Christ; and this gives—this *is*—the all-sufficient authority for baptizing in His name. This alone constitutes them Christian churches, and authorizes them to act as such. And the more of Christ's spirit any church or denomination possesses, the more truly Christian is it—the more is it *His* church. And is it quite modest or becoming in us Swedenborgians—does it evince a large measure of Christian humility—to claim that His spirit dwells in us in any such pre-eminent degree, as to give us an exclusive title to the Christian name? *Does* this claim appear to be well-founded?

But the old Christian Church, it is said, has come to its end; it is dead and consummated; therefore none but those who accept the doctrines of the New Church have any right now to be regarded as Christians, or to administer the Christian ordinances. So the old Summer of last year has come to *its* end. But when the new Summer comes, are its quickening and life-giving influences confined to some small section a few miles square, or do they penetrate, in a greater or less degree, every portion of our hemisphere? The promised second coming of our Lord was to be like

"lightning coming out of the east and shining even unto the west"—language that clearly indicates not a partial but a general enlightenment. True, the Old Church *has* come to its end. The Dispensation on which it rested was consummated, and a New Dispensation commenced, a hundred years ago. And under this latter Dispensation, Christians of every name are now living. Its enlightening and healing influences are to-day falling with more or less directness and with varied intensity upon all. It is a great mistake, therefore, to infer that all in Christendom at this time, who have never read Swedenborg, or do not profess the doctrines of the New Church as taught by him, must, therefore, belong to the Old Church. *There is no Old Church now*, of the character of that existing in Swedenborg's time, and concerning which he wrote. That church came to its end—died—passed away—more than a hundred years ago. True, most of the existing churches or sects continue to hold or profess doctrines quite similar to those of the former church; but this, in most cases, is mere profession. It is more in appearance than in reality that the church we now call "Old," resembles the one that has passed away. It resembles it merely on the outside. Internally it is not the same, but very different. Continually, and through ten thousand channels, the Lord is steadily pouring into all existing churches the light and life of the New. And this is precisely what might have been

expected. Writing more than a century ago concerning the effects of the Last Judgment upon the future state of the church, Swedenborg says: "But as for the state of the church, this it is which will be dissimilar hereafter; it will be similar indeed in the *outward form*, but dissimilar in the *inward*."—(*L. J.*, 73.) And among the outward appearances of similarity which he proceeds to specify, are: that "divided churches will exist as heretofore;" and "*their doctrines* will be taught as heretofore;" but *inwardly* these churches (evidently the very churches which many of us are in the habit of denominating "Old") were not to continue the same, because of the greater mental freedom vouchsafed to all. "Henceforth the man of the church," he says "will be in a more free state of thinking on matters of faith, that is, on spiritual things which relate to heaven." And why? "Because *spiritual liberty* has been restored to him." In harmony with all this, he further says: "The state of the world and of the church before the Last Judgment, was as evening and night, but after it as morning and day." And again: "After the Last Judgment was accomplished, there was light in the world of spirits, because the infernal societies, which were removed, had been interposed like clouds which darken the earth. *A similar light also then arose in men in the world, giving them new enlightenment.*"—(*Contin. L. J.*, 12, 30.) Now, if we believe this, we must believe that the churches throughout

Christendom are to-day in quite a different state from what they were prior to 1757.

From the foregoing, then, it is plain enough, we think, what Swedenborg meant by the end of the Old or former Christian Church. He meant the end of the *Aiön* or Age—the close of that first Christian Era, which was consummated at the time of the Last Judgment. It was the end of that Era or Age which the Saviour foretold, and nothing else. And at its termination a New Age was inaugurated. A new morning dawned upon the world. New light from heaven burst forth upon the children of men. New truth—new modes of thought—new views of God, of duty, and of immortality—a new spirit and a new life—began then to descend into the heart of humanity. The Old Age went out like the old year, and a New Age came in like the new year, to take the place of the Old. The outward forms of the Old Church—its doctrine, creed, and ritual—have remained, for the most part, unchanged, as Swedenborg foresaw and foretold that they would. Yet, for all that, new light has found its way to the minds, and a new spirit has begun to penetrate the hearts, of the people. So true is it, what an eminent scholar and theologian of our times (Rev. Mr. Sears) has so well said: "An old system of theology may pass clean away, and a different one take its place, without the least change in the old creeds and nomenclatures; just as the Roman republic passed into the

empire, and liberty changed into despotism, without the least change in the *forms* of government."

But the New Church, it is further argued, has the spiritual and true sense of the Scriptures. "Her understanding is opened," says Dr. Worcester, "so that she understands them correctly;" and since "the *understanding* of the Word makes the church," therefore we Swedenborgians *are* the church, for we alone understand the Word. To many minds, no doubt, this seems conclusive. But our reply to it is, that, to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, and therefore a member of the Christian church, does, by no means, involve the necessity of understanding the Word in its spiritual sense. The literal sense, such as all Christians understand and accept, is capable of effecting the most intimate union with the Lord and the angels. "A man," says Swedenborg, "who reads the Word under holy influence, is conjoined closely with heaven, and by heaven with the Lord, although the man thinks only of those things in the Word which appertain to its literal sense."—(*A. C.*, 3735.) "What man understands naturally, the angels understand spiritually" (*N. J. D.*, 1; *H. H.*, 307); and "with the angels, ceremonial rites are regarded spiritually."—(*A. C.*, 2702.) "The angels who are attendant on man, are in interior truths while he is in exterior;" and when any one reads the Word in a devout frame of mind, although he understands it only in its literal sense, "there flows an affection out of heaven

through the angels into that holy principle by which man is influenced at the time, which affection he receives according to the good of his life."—(*Ib.*, 3464.) "The internal of the Word then flows in and is conjoined with good, when a man [who understands only the literal sense] accounts the Word holy; and he then accounts the Word holy when he is in good."—(*Ib.*, 6789.) Besides, there is so thin a veil over the internal of some of the most *essential portions* of the Word, that the light shines through and affects all minds, even those who know nothing of the spiritual sense of the Word generally. "For the Word in that sense [the literal] is like a man clothed whose face and hands are naked. All things *necessary to the life of man*, are naked; but the rest are clothed; and in many places where they are clothed, they shine through the clothing as the face shines through a veil of thin silk."—(*D. S. S.*, 55.) And much more might be cited of similar purport.

Now, is it not plain from these extracts, that Swedenborg considered, as within "the Christian Church," a vast multitude of persons who understand the Word only in its literal sense? for we know there are many such who reverence the Word, who read and study it devoutly, and live good and holy lives. These, surely, *have* the Word; and are they to be considered as *out of* the church?—*not Christians?* So would this Report have us consider them; but so would *not* the herald of the New Jerusalem. "For within the

church," he says, "is the Word, in which are the truths of faith."—(*A. C.*, 10238.) And "Baptism is for those who are within the church, because these have the Word containing the truths of faith by which man is regenerated."—(*Ib.*, 9088.) Why did he not say that "Baptism, henceforward, will be for those within the church who understand the Word in its spiritual sense; and when administered by others it will be without efficacy and without validity—*will not be Christian baptism*"? Clearly because he never intended to teach, and we say *he never did* teach, any such doctrine on this subject, as the President of the General Convention and the great majority of his brethren imagine.

And here we dismiss the subject—and along with it the Report of this "Committee of Ministers." We have aimed to show that the conclusions of this Report, which, according to the record, "was accepted and approved unanimously" by the General Convention, are not wholesome, not reasonable, not charitable, not in accordance with the teachings of Swedenborg, *not true*. How far we have been successful, we leave our readers to judge. The question is a practical one, and ought to be calmly and thoroughly considered by all New-Churchmen. To our mind nothing is plainer than that the position of the Convention, as defined in this Report, is wholly unauthorized, and alike injurious to the states of those within and those with-

out the nominal New Church. And although ecclesiastical bodies—not to their credit is this said—rarely review their positions or retrace their steps, we will still cherish the hope that the Convention may some day see, acknowledge, and put away its error on this subject. This persuading ourselves, or permitting ourselves to cherish the conviction, that we are the Lord's church to the exclusion of all others—that we alone are Christians, and, as such, have an exclusive right to administer the Christian ordinances, recalls to our mind the following instructive relation in the *Arcana Cœlestia*, which deserves the thoughtful consideration of all New-Churchmen, and with which we close our somewhat extended review:

"There are also societies of interior friendship [in the other life]. They were such in the life of the body, that they loved from the heart those who were within their common consociation, and also mutually embraced them as united in brotherhood. They believed that they themselves alone were alive and in the light, and that they who were out of their society were respectively not alive and not in the light. And this being their quality and character, they also thought that the Lord's heaven consisted solely of those few. But it was given to tell them that the Lord's heaven is immense, and that it consists of every people and tongue, and that all are therein who have been principled in the good of love and of faith; and it was shown that there are in heaven those who have relation to all the provinces of the body, as to its exteriors and interiors; but that if they aspired fur-

ther than to those things which correspond to their life, they could not have heaven; especially if they condemned others who were out of their society: and that in such a case, their society is a society of interior friendship, the quality whereof is such, that they deprive others of the blessed principle of spiritual affection when they approach them, for they regard them as not the elect, and as not alive; which thought, when communicated, induces what is sad, and yet this sadness, according to the Laws of Order in the other life, returns to them."—*A. C.*, 4805.

B. F. B.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

[In previous chapters I have more than once referred to the illiberal and exclusive policy of our recognized New Church organs. I have expressed regret at their persistent refusal to insert articles from the pens of the more liberal members of our church, whenever their views were supposed to be in any respect different from those of the majority. The very ungenerous—sometimes very unjust—course pursued by our New Church journals in this respect, has produced, from time to time, much grief and some disturbance in our body. The views of liberal New-Churchmen may be misrepresented or caricatured, as they sometimes have been; but no correction of the misstatement and no reply to the caricature can be admitted into the same columns. I speak from positive knowledge and personal experience, having myself made several unsuccessful attempts to get corrections of misstatements or mistakes inserted in the organs aforesaid, but never yet a *successful* one. And as this uniform policy of our New Church journals affords rather a striking exemplification of the uncatholicity of

New-Churchmen, I will give here a single instance by way of illustration.

In the year 1856, I published a small work on "The Visible Church," designed to show that the church of the New Jerusalem is considerably broader and more comprehensive than our Swedenborgian organization. And although this work was repeatedly referred to in the columns of our journals—never, I believe, in a particularly kind or flattering way—yet I am not aware that it was ever reviewed in any of the recognized organs of the New Church, or that a faithful synopsis of it was ever given, or that an attempt was ever seriously made to overthrow or invalidate its conclusions. Not unfrequently, however, did I encounter, with pain and regret, singular misapprehensions and sometimes distortions of the meaning of that work. In the summer of 1858, the *New Jerusalem Messenger* referred to it in not the most friendly way, and pronounced its teachings contrary to Scripture, contrary to Swedenborg, and contrary to the views of Christians generally both within and without the nominal New Church. I believed that if the readers of the *Messenger* could see precisely what my view on that subject was, they would see that they had been strangely misled by that paper. I felt it to be my duty, therefore, to undeceive them—which could only be done, however, through the columns of the same journal. Accordingly I wrote a plain statement of my

view, in language as clear, calm, and temperate as I knew how to use—and sent it to the *Messenger*. I uttered not a syllable of reproach against any one. I was even so charitable as to attribute the distortion to a *misapprehension* on the part of the editor of that paper. And after exhausting every effort in my power to procure the insertion of my communication, sending it successively, and without the least delay, to the *Messenger* office in New York, to the General Convention then holding its session in Boston, to the senior editor in North Bridgewater (Mass.), and to a junior editor in Cincinnati (Ohio),—writing some half dozen letters, and waiting just *fifty-one days* for my communication to travel its appointed rounds, I was at last told that it could not be admitted into the columns of the *Messenger*. Nor was I in the least disappointed at this. It was precisely what my previous experience had led me to anticipate And this is only *one* of many similar cases that might be cited.

In order that the reader may understand the tenor of the communication referred to, and be able, therefore, to judge for himself whether its exclusion could have been prompted by the catholic and tolerant spirit of the New Church as unfolded in PART FIRST of this work, I give below the entire article, without the addition or alteration of a single word.]

THE CHURCH VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

MR. EDITOR:—In your paper of May 29th is an article entitled "The End of Controversy," in which my views concerning the Church *visible* and *invisible* are referred to and spoken of as I think they would not have been, if I had not been greatly misapprehended on that subject. You not only characterize my view of the Church as "a fallacy,"—"opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures and the writings of the New Church,"—but state it to be this: "that the true Church is only an invisible something." Now the readers of your paper could not fail to be greatly misled by this language. They would naturally infer from it that I deny the very existence of the Lord's true Church as a real entity;—that I hold it to be an imaginary thing, a chimera,—"*only* an invisible something."

Now I do not love to believe that you, or others professing the same religious faith with myself, *wish* to misrepresent me on this or on any subject. But the manner in which my views are often referred to in some New-Church periodicals, convinces me, either that I have been particularly unfortunate in stating them, or that some of my brethren have been particularly unfortunate in interpreting my statements.

With your kind permission, therefore, I will endeavor to state, with all possible clearness and brevity, my view concerning the Church *visible* and *invisi-*

ble; and I do it, in the hope of correcting the misapprehension under which some of my brethren appear to be laboring. Observe, I do not ask the use of your columns for the purpose of *arguing* this question, but simply to state my own position, and so to set myself right on this subject before your readers. This privilege, I trust, you will not deny me; as such denial would inevitably force me to a very unpleasant conclusion.

My view of the *true* Church, then, is this: That it is *not* an abstraction, not an imaginary thing, but that it consists (in Christian countries) of *all those persons* who are in a state of love to the Lord, and charity toward the neighbor; or, of all those (to cite the explicit language of Swedenborg) "who believe in the Lord and live according to his commandments in the Word."—(*A. R.*, 925.) I believe that *none* others, whatever doctrines they may profess, or however many or interior truths they may know, "form any part of the [true] Church whatever."—(*Ap. Ex.*, 388; see also *A. C.*, 6637.) I believe that these people are not all in any *one* Christian communion or religious organization, but that they are scattered throughout the various communions; or, as Swedenborg says, "dispersed throughout the whole world."—(*T. C. R.*, 307.) Thus they are not distinguished by the *name* they bear, or the *doctrines* they profess, since these are various; for doctrinals "do not serve to distinguish churches before the Lord."—(*A. C.*, 1799.) I

believe that the Lord *alone* is able with certainty to distinguish these people from others, and that no man and no number of men can possibly do this; for to be in or out of this Church depends upon a person's spiritual quality, or the state of his heart, and this is known only to the Lord (*A. R.*, 364); for He says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." He *alone*, therefore, is able to separate the goats from the sheep,—the tares from the wheat,—because He *alone* can fully discern the quality of either; and even *He* does not make this separation during man's abode in this world,—not until the time of the harvest, not until the judgment day,—much less has He authorized men to make it. This Church, therefore, I call the *true* and *invisible* Church; *true*, because it embraces all those who are spiritually and truly conjoined to the Lord, and *known to Him* as living members; and *invisible*, because *unseen of men*, that is, *unknown* to them as members of the Lord's true Church.

I also believe in the Church as a visible institution, and in its great importance and use. And when I speak of the Christian Church as an *institution*, I mean the aggregate of all those societies in Christendom, instituted or organized for worship and the observance of Christian rites and ordinances. I believe that these societies generally are of a mixed character, embracing some saints and some sinners—some wheat and some tares—some sheep and some goats.

I believe that the members of no single religious organization in Christendom are either all sheep or all goats. But as they all *appear* to be *sheep*, as they all have sheep's clothing, because they all profess to be worshippers and followers of Him who is "the Good Shepherd," therefore, from this appearance or profession, they are all *called* the *Church;* though they are not the *true* Church, since this contains none but the Lord's genuine disciples,—His own sheep. And inasmuch as it is *known to men* who are the members of this Church,—for every religious society is supposed to know who really belong to it, however little it may sometimes know of the interior quality of its members,—therefore I call this the *visible* Church. To *see* is to understand or *know;* as when a person says, "I *see* how it is," he means, "I understand or *know* how it is." Therefore, to be seen or *visible*, is to be understood or *known*. Consequently the Christian Church *visible* is the aggregate of those Christian assemblies or societies commonly understood, or *known to men*, as the Church. But because it is really a mixed multitude, containing, as I believe, many persons who are not in conjunction with the Lord, therefore this is *not* the *true* Church; for the true Church contains nothing "that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," but *only* those who are "written in the Lamb's book of life."—(Rev. xxi.)

But as some may not understand what I have just been saying,—though to me it all seems exceedingly

plain,—and as I wish, if possible, to save my brethren "the expense of much wreathing and wrinkling of brows" (see a late pamphlet on "The Priesthood," p. 21), I will, with your permission, endeavor to make my thought plainer by a simple illustration.

Suppose, then, there were five hundred sheep and three hundred goats together in the same pasture, and in one flock,—which we will call flock No. 1. Suppose that the goats looked and acted so like sheep, that no one but *the shepherd himself* could possibly distinguish them. Therefore, from the outward appearance, they would all be *called sheep*. But suppose the shepherd comes to-morrow and separates the sheep from the goats, and puts them in a pasture by themselves;—which flock we will call No. 2,—all pure sheep. Now, it seems as if it required but little discernment to perceive, that, although both flocks (Nos. 1 and 2) are *called sheep*, the flocks are by no means identical. No. 1 is made up of five hundred sheep *plus* three hundred goats; while No. 2 consists of eight hundred animals (all *called sheep* from their appearance) *minus* three hundred goats,—which our arithmetic makes *equal* five hundred sheep. There is, then, a broad distinction between these two flocks,—a distinction which I should suppose any one might understand, without any "wreathing or wrinkling of brows." Now if you let flock No. 1 represent the *visible* Church (a *mixed* multitude), and flock No. 2 the *invisible* Church (the Lord's own sheep, and none

others), you will have my idea of the distinction between these two churches, and their relation to each other.

You also say, in your paper of the 29th ultimo, that my position on this question is "in opposition to the views and sentiments . . . . of nearly all professing Christians." So far from this being true, I find, upon a careful examination, that my view is the very one which has been maintained by the most intelligent Christian writers, who have written upon this subject at all, from the days of Augustine to the present time. Permit me to cite one or two paragraphs, to show that the view I have expressed is no novelty, and by no means "*peculiar*" to myself.

Thus Bishop Taylor, in his eloquent "Dissuasive from Popery," says:—

"The Church of God are the body of Christ; but the mere *profession* of Christianity makes no man a member of Christ,—nothing but a new creature, nothing but 'a faith working by love', and keeping the commandments of God. Now they that do this are not known to be such *by men*, but they are known only to God; and therefore it is [they are] in a true sense *the invisible* Church; not that there are two churches, or two societies, in separation from each other. . . . No, these two churches are but one society; the one is within the other;—but though the men be visible, yet that quality and excellency by which they are constituted Christ's members, and distinguished from mere professors and outsides of Christians, this, I say, *is not visible*. . . . The invisible

Church is ordinarily and regularly part of the visible, but yet that part only *that is the true* one; and the rest, but by denomination of law, and in *common speaking*, are the Church,—not in mystical union, not in proper relation to Christ; they are not the house of God, not the temple of the Holy Ghost, not the members of Christ; and *no man can deny this.* . . . If by a church we mean that society which is really joined to Christ, which hath received the Holy Ghost, which is heir of the promises and of the good things of God, which is the body of which Christ is the head, then the *invisible* part of the visible Church, that is, *the true servants of Christ only, are the Church.*"

And Bishop McIlvaine, who may be considered a fair representative of the views of the Protestant Episcopal Church of this country on that subject, says, in his excellent discourse on "the Holy Catholic Church":—

"The *visible* Church is the Church *as seen of men*, in the mixed mass of the true and the false, the genuine and the counterfeit, people of God. The *invisible* Church is the same Church as seen only of God, in the unmixed company of all his faithful people. The one is that great flock gathered together by the call of the Gospel, from all parts of the earth, to the *professed* following of the Good Shepherd, in which the sheep of his pasture are mingled with the goats that know him not, and are none of his; all, however, *visibly*, that is, *professedly*, his flock. The other is simply so much of that mixed multitude as do truly hear the voice of the Shepherd, and follow Him, and unto whom He giveth eternal life."

And *The Independent*, a weekly paper published in New York, which may be regarded as a fair exponent of the views of the Trinitarian Congregationalists of our country on this subject, speaking of "the Church of Christ," says:—

"By the Church here we mean the aggregate of all *real* Christians; all branches of the true Vine; all who are united to Christ by a living faith, and who are joint heirs with him to the heavenly inheritence. It is the Church *invisible*, and includes all true Christians, of whatever denomination, age, or country; and it *includes no others*. Vital union with Christ is absolutely necessary in order to membership. Profession here avails nothing; union with Christ, everything. . . . By a *visible* Church we mean any society of professed believers in Christ, associated together for the worship of God, and the observance of Christian ordinances. If all were *really* Christians, then the Holy Catholic Church, and the local, visible churches, would be substantially one."—(For October 25, 1855.)

And the same view has been expressed by Augustine, Archbishops Cranmer and Usher, Bishops Ridley and Hall, Drs. Barrow, Perkins, Jackson, and Channing, and numerous others. And if the view of these distinguished writers has ever been refuted, or opposed with anything like a *show* of solid argument, I have never chanced to meet with it, and should be greatly obliged if you would point it out to me. So, if I believe, as you allege, "that the true

Church is only an invisible something," I have the satisfaction of knowing that men much wiser than myself have believed the very same.

You further declare my view on this subject to be "opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures and the writings of the New Church." Were it not through fear of encroaching upon your columns to an extent beyond what I have a right to do, I might easily show that precisely the distinction which I make between the *visible* and the *invisible* Church, is made by Swedenborg in scores of instances. Indeed, the view I have expressed was first arrived at through a careful study of his writings, and before I was aware of what many other distinguished writers had said upon the same subject. We all know how often Swedenborg speaks of the Church as consisting *only* of those who are in charity and faith, or who learn truths from the Word and *do* them. "No others," says he, "*form any part of the Church whatever*" (*Ap. Ex.*, 388); that is, evidently, no part of the *true* Church. We also know how often he speaks of the *evil* quality of the Christian Church in his day (See *A. C.*, 3480, where he closes the paragraph thus: "Whence it appears what is the quality of *the Church*"). In all such passages is it not obvious that he is speaking of the Church as a visible institution, or of the collective body of those in Christian countries? Certainly he is not here using the word *church* in that exalted sense in which he oftentimes uses it, and in which it

signifies *only* those who are "written in the Lamb's book of life." So when speaking of those "who know truths, which are called articles of belief, and do not live in charity," he remarks: "Although they are *in* the Church as being born there, still they are not *of* the Church, inasmuch as they have nothing of the Church in them."—(*A. C.*, 3267.) *In what* Church? I would ask. Evidently in the *visible* Church, —in that outward institution which embraces all the professed disciples of the Lord,—the goats *and* the sheep. It cannot be the *true* Church that is here meant, since those are said to be *in* it who "*do not live in charity*," and so "are not *of* the Church,"—that is, evidently, not of the *true* Church.

But I have already extended this communication beyond the limits I had prescribed for myself. I have not aimed here to argue the question, though I feel that weighty and unanswerable arguments in support of my view might be drawn from reason, observation, the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of our illumined author. I have aimed at little more than simply to *state* my view, and to show that it is by no means a novel one, or "*peculiar*" to myself, as I have seen it recently characterized; and I will add, that I have never anywhere advocated a view of the Church at variance with the one here presented. You think it a "fallacy" which has been fully dissipated" in a recent pamphlet, which regards the idea of a priesthood or clergy under the Christian dispen-

sation as a fallacy, or something worse—and aims to dissipate that also. And if I may be allowed to express my private opinion, I should say that one is just about as great a fallacy as the other, and has been just as "fully dissipated" in the pamphlet referred to.

Yours respectfully,

B. F. BARRETT.

ORANGE, N. J., June I, 1858.

I will only add here, what was stated in substance in the introduction to this chapter, that I used every effort in my power to procure the publication of the foregoing article in the columns of the *Messenger*, but without success. Let the reader judge whether its exclusion was prompted by genuine charity, and whether it was conformable to the tolerant and catholic spirit of the New Jerusalem.

CHAPTER IV.

A CONTRAST—REV. JOHN CLOWES AND ROBERT HINDMARSH.

Two individuals have, in a pre-eminent degree, left their impress upon the Church of the New Jerusalem; one, upon the invisible and real, the other, upon the visible and nominal, New Church. Both were men of eminent ability; but one was remarkable for his humility, charity, catholicity, and piety, while in the other, these graces were not particularly conspicuous. Both were sincere receivers and zealous advocates of the doctrines of the New Church; but while one seemed to receive them into his heart and to experience their renewing power, the other seemed to receive them only into his head—his intellect. Both claimed to be New-Churchmen; but one saw the New Church wherever he saw a humble and devoted follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, whatever his creed or outward church relations, while the other saw it only among those who openly professed the doctrines taught by Swedenborg, and formally separated themselves from all other Christians. One seemed to comprehend the large and catholic spirit of Swedenborg's writings, and interpreted them ac-

cordingly; while the other seemed to overlook or not to appreciate this spirit, and interpreted the same writings often in the most narrow and sectarian way. One believed that the New Jerusalem came down from God out of heaven into all humble, penitent, and obedient hearts; while the other *seemed* to think that it was to be built up by human wit and wisdom —to be a new visible institution, with new ordinances, a new priesthood, and a new ritual. One devoted himself mainly to the new and more complete establishment of Christ's kingdom in human hearts, leaving outward forms for the present undisturbed, or to be gradually moulded anew by the internal and normal workings of higher truth and purer love; the other was chiefly interested in the immediate establishment of a new church-organization—in the building up of a new Sect. One, therefore, may be taken as the fit representation of the genuine, the other of the nominal or sectarian, New Jerusalem. These individuals were, the Rev. JOHN CLOWES and ROBERT HINDMARSH.

The contrast between the character of these two men is very striking, and merits the thoughtful consideration of all New-Churchmen, who sincerely desire that the writings of Swedenborg may be saved from the manifold perversions, which minds of a sectarian bias are ever inclined to give them. If we will compare the character of these individuals, and consider especially the manner in which they were

respectively called to the New Church, or to the reception of its doctrines, it may help us to form just conclusions upon several points whereon the opinions of New-Churchmen have been divided, We shall, at any rate, be able to judge from such comparison, which of these two gentlemen would be likely to comprehend most fully the precious verities of the New Jerusalem, or to be the soundest and safest interpreter of the writings of Swedenborg. We should certainly expect that he who dwells nearest the Lord —who enjoys in fullest measure the light of His countenance, would be best able to tell us who are the Lord's children, or who constitute his true and living church on earth.

Mr. Clowes was born at Manchester (England) in 1743—the same year that Swedenborg's illumination commenced. His father was a barrister-at-law, and his mother the daughter of a pious and learned clergyman of Wales—said to have been a most excellent woman. Great care was bestowed upon his early education, particularly upon the development and formation of his religious character. He received his later and classical education at the University of Cambridge, where he was graduated in 1766. Three years later, he accepted the Rectorship of St. John's Church in Manchester, which office he held for the unusual term of *sixty-two years*—the remainder of his life.

Four years after, (1773,) he was introduced to Richard Houghton, Esq., of Liverpool, a gentleman of large estate, and of acknowledged piety and learning. Mr. Houghton had enjoyed the advantages of a university education, possessed a large library, and was a great reader, particularly of Theology, which was his favorite study. Mr. Clowes learned, from conversation with this excellent man, that he had been for a few years past a diligent reader of the theological writings of Em. Swedenborg, in the original Latin, and that he prized those writings above all price. At the close of their interview he urged Mr. Clowes, in an earnest and affectionate manner, to peruse these remarkable writings, advising him to commence with the work entitled *Vera Christiana Religio*, (True Christian Religion,) which had not then been translated into English. The only work of Swedenborg to be found in English at that time, was the Treatise on Influx.

Upon this circumstance Mr. Clowes never ceased to look back, as upon one of the happiest and most important events of his whole life. He was too much affected by the earnestness, tenderness, and evident sincerity which accompanied this gentleman's request, not to comply with the tenor of it immediately on his return home. Accordingly he sent to London and obtained a copy of the *Vera Christiana Religio*. But, what will seem to some a little remarkable, after he had obtained the book, he felt not the

slightest inclination to read it for a considerable time. The volume was rather repulsive to him on account of its size. Then he observed that it treated principally on points of doctrine, and this rendered it still more repulsive. And besides, "I am satisfied," said he to himself, "with my present spiritual attainments, and with that heaven of innocence, purity, and peace in God, to which they have introduced me. What need I then to trouble or concern myself about speculative investigations, which cannot add either to my sanctity or bliss? Alas!" he adds, "I was not aware, at the time, either of the pearls of wisdom which I was overlooking, or of my own want of them, both for ornament and for use. I was deceiving myself (as is the case, it is to be feared, with many Christians) by supposing that I had attained the highest point of Christian purification and perfection, and was already in full possession of the supreme good and the supreme truth, without considering that the Christian life is a continually progressive life, and that to stand still, therefore, under any present attainments, whether of goodness or wisdom, is to change its character from progressive to stagnant.

For several months the *Vera Christiana Religio* remained upon his shelf unexamined and untouched. At length a remarkable circumstance occurred, which induced him to take up and read with attention, and without prejudice, this hitherto neglected

volume. I relate the circumstance in Mr. Clowes' own language:

"In the month of October, immediately succeeding the spring, when the *True Christian Religion* was recommended to me by my friend at Liverpool, I went, according to annual custom, to visit an old college pupil of mine, the late Right Honorable John Smith of Heath, in the county of York. On the evening before I set out, I opened the long-neglected volume, not with a view to read it, but merely to get a better idea of the general nature of its contents, when, in turning over the pages, I happened to cast my eye upon the term *Divinum Humanum*. The term appeared new and strange, but still it did not affect my mind in a manner to produce any lasting impression, and accordingly, on shutting up the book, it seemed to be forgotten and gone. Probably, too, it would never again have been recalled to my remembrance, had it not been for the following memorable circumstance.

"On awaking early one morning, not many days after my arrival at my friend's house, my mind was suddenly and powerfully drawn into a state of inward recollection, attended with an inexpressible calm and composure, into which was instilled a tranquility of peace and heavenly joy, such as I had never before experienced. Whilst I lay musing on this strange, and to me most delightful harmony in the interiors of my mind, instantly there was made manifest, in the same recesses of my spirit, what I can call by no other name than a *divine glory*, surpassing all description, and exciting the most profound adoration. But what seemed to me the most singular circumstance

on this occasion was, that I was strongly impressed at the time, by a kind of internal dictate, that *the glory* was in close connection with that *Divinum Humanum*, or *Divine Humanity* above mentioned, and proceeded from it, as from its proper divine source.

"*The glory* continued during a full hour, allowing me sufficient time both to view and analyze it. Sometimes I closed my bodily eyes, and then opened them again, but *the glory* remained the same. It is well, however, to be understood, that there was no appearance presented of any visible form, but only a strong persuasion that *the glory* proceeded from a visible form, and that this form was no other than the *Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ.* When *the glory* disappeared, as it did by degrees, I quitted my bed, but the recollection of what had happened attended me during the whole of the day, whether I was in company or alone; and what is still more remarkable, the next morning, on my first awaking, *the glory* was again manifested, but, if possible, with increased splendor. Now, too, a singular effect was produced by it upon my mind, convincing me of the spiritual and providential origin of what I had seen, by the important end to which it pointed, and was designed to conduct me. The effect was no other than the excitement of a strong and almost irresistible desire to return home immediately, in order to enter upon a serious and attentive perusal of the *neglected volume*, which I had left behind me. And such was the powerful impulse of this desire, that although I had intended to remain with my friend a week or a fortnight longer, yet I made some excuse for quitting his house the next day, and hastened back to Manchester, rather with the impetuosity of a lover, than with the

sedateness of a man who had no other object of pursuit but to consult the pages of an unknown, and heretofore slighted book."

A sudden change in his feelings toward the neglected work, was wrought by this remarkable circumstance. He immediately felt an intense and uncontrollable desire to read it. He did read it—and his interest and delight in its teachings increased with every page he read. To use his own words:

"It is impossible for any language to express the full effect wrought in my mind by the perusal of this wonderful *book*. Suffice it, therefore, to observe, that, in proceeding from the chapter on the *Creator and on Creation* to the succeeding chapters—it seemed as if a continually increasing blaze of new and recreating light was poured forth on the delighted understanding, opening it to the contemplation of the most sublime mysteries of wisdom, and convincing it of the being of a God, of the existence of an eternal world, of the interior sanctities of the Holy Scriptures, of the true nature of creation, redemption, and regeneration, in a manner and degree, and with a force of satisfactory evidence, in which those interesting subjects had never been viewed before. The mind was no longer perplexed about the proper Object of its worship. All difficulties and doubts were removed respecting the sacred Scriptures, or word of God, through the bright, and heretofore unseen, manifestation of their spiritual and interior contents, by virtue of which discovery apparent inconsistencies vanished, apparent contradictions

were reconciled; and what before seemed trivial and nugatory, assumed a new and interesting aspect; whilst the whole volume of Revelation was seen to be full of sanctity, of wisdom, and of love from its divine Author, and also to be in perpetual connection with that Author, who is its inmost soul—*its essential spirit and life.*"

Encouraged by the stores of heavenly wisdom which he found in this volume, Mr. Clowes naturally felt a strong desire to read more of Swedendorg's works. To cite again his own language:

"No sooner had I finished the perusal of the True Christian Religion, than the Treatise on Heaven and Hell, the Arcana Cœlestia, the Apocalypse Revealed, the Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom, and also concerning the Divine Providence, the Delights of Wisdom concerning Conjugial Love, &c., with other minor tracts by the same author, were successively read, or rather devoured, and as constantly excited wonder, delight, and edification. At the same time a strong and ardent desire was enkindled to put others in possession of the same sources of heavenly intelligence; and this desire frequently, yet tacitly, expressed itself in those words of the great Saviour, where he prays, '*Father, that they may be with me, to behold Thy glory.*' John 17: 24. For the whole testimony as delivered by the messenger of the New Jerusalem Verities, in his theological writings, appeared to my mind like a *radiant glory, from the face of Jesus Christ*, and repeatedly called to my recollection the words of that Incarnate God, where, speaking of His second advent, He says, '*Then shall ye see the sign of*

he Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory.' Matt. 24: 30.

Such, in brief, was the manner of Mr. Clowes' conversion to the faith of the New Church—not less remarkable than, and not very unlike, the Apostle Paul's conversion to Christianity. And his subsequent labors proved the genuineness and deep sincerity of his faith. Impelled by the strong desire above mentioned, to make known to others the precious truths of the New Jerusalem, he immediately commenced translating the works of Swedenborg into English; and in two years he completed the translation of the True Christian Religion, and in about twenty years the translation of the Arcana Cœlestia, (13 Vols.,) Conjugial Love, Earths in the Universe, and the Doctrine of Life for the New Jerusalem.

From the time he first became interested in these writings, to the close of his natural life—a period of nearly sixty years—he remained a diligent reader, an affectionate receiver, and an active and successful promulgator of the doctrines of the New Church. No other individual has ever done so much toward propagating these doctrines, as he did. He preached them openly, earnestly, and constantly from his pulpit. He conversed and lectured upon them at his own house, and on every suitable occasion elsewhere. He wrote numerous letters about them to his friends at home and abroad. And besides translating the

principal part of the works of Swedenborg, he wrote and published about fifty works of his own, large and small in defense, and explanation of these Doctrines. The Rev. Mr. Noble, who knew him personally, speaks of him as "*the principal instrument*" in diffusing the truths of the New Church throughout the kingdom of Great Britain. He compares him with Swedenborg, and says:

"To Britons, and to all who speak the language of Britain, he stood in a relation toward Swedenborg analogous to that which Aaron bore to Moses. But for him, or some other person raised to fill the office which he discharged so well, Swedenborg must still have been, to almost all, both in a natural and a spiritual point of view, as Moses says of himself, 'slow of speech, and of a slow tongue;'—unintelligible to the generality, not more for the learned language in which he wrote, than for the elevated and abstract character of the divine truths which he delivered. But in Mr. Clowes he found a genuine 'brother,'—a kindred spirit, eminently qualified, as another Aaron, to be his 'spokesman unto the people.' This character he sustained not only by the translation of his works from Latin into English, which any other learned man might, if sufficiently zealous and industrious, have accomplished, but by a talent for bringing down the interior truths which they contain to the comprehension of the most simple and common understanding, and presenting them in the most engaging form, even to the adapting of them for the instruction of children. It is owing, I verily believe, as its *immediate* cause, to our having had a Clowes,

that the doctrines of the New Church have made greater progress in England, and in the United States of America, (the people of which are still Englishmen as to language,) than in any other country upon earth. No wonder then if one, who was to be the instrument of such extensive usefulness, was called to the work by as special a divine interposition as was vouchsafed to Swedenborg himself."

Then what was the character which this man bore among those who knew him personally? The fact that he retained the Rectorship of St. John's Church for more than a half century, and retained for the same period the affections of his people in a manner almost without a parallel—and this, too, notwithstanding his deep interest in the doctrines of the New Church, and his zeal in disseminating them—ought to be good evidence on this point. All who knew him bear willing testimony to the remarkable strength, elevation, and nobleness of his character—to the purity, beauty, and holiness of his life. His biographer, after enumerating some of his estimable traits and valuable labors, says: "But what most delighted those with whom he associated, was, his unaffected piety, his Christian charity, his humility and innocence of character, together with his amiable and gentlemanly deportment; these excellencies, combined with his great abilities and acquirements as a scholar and divine, rendered him one of those exalted characters, which are, at this day, rarely to be met with."

In the fiftieth year of his incumbency as Rector of St. John's, his congregation, desirous of testifying their affectionate respect and esteem for his public and private worth, placed in a conspicuous part of the church, by unanimous agreement, a MARBLE TABLET, bearing the following beautiful and appropriate inscription:

To Commemorate
THE FIFTIETH YEAR OF THE MINISTRY
OF THE REV. JOHN CLOWES, M. A.
THE FIRST AND THE PRESENT RECTOR
OF THIS CHURCH;
AND TO TESTIFY THEIR
AFFECTIONATE ESTEEM AND VENERATION
FOR THE PIETY, LEARNING, AND BENEVOLENCE
OF THEIR AMIABLE PASTOR;
WITH FEELINGS OF DEVOUT GRATITUDE TO ALMIGHTY GOD
WHO HATH HITHERTO PRESERVED—
AND WITH THEIR UNITED PRAYERS
THAT HIS GOOD PROVIDENCE WILL LONG CONTINUE
TO PRESERVE AMONGST THEM
SO EMINENT AND ENGAGING AN EXAMPLE
OF CHRISTIAN MEEKNESS, PURITY, AND LOVE,
THE CONGREGATION OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, MANCHESTER,
ERECT THIS TABLET.
MDCCCXXIX.

He was removed to the world of spirits on the 29th of May, 1831, in the 88th year of his age. He died as he had lived—full of kindness and of Christian love—full of meekness, and humble reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ—full of confidence in the truth of the doctrines revealed through Swedenborg,—full of earnest longing that these doctrines might be more extensively read and circulated, and that all others might learn from experience, as he had learned, their purifying, ennobling, and regenerating power.

The following is from an obituary notice of him that appeared in the *London Times* of June 4, 1831:

"———— His affections were ever alive toward all who came within the sphere of his usefulness; and it would have been difficult for any one to resist the influence of that goodness which showed itself in all he did, or said, or looked; and to have been with him, even for a little while, without being impressed with a sense of the loveliness of Christian principle, as it was exemplified in him. He was a scholar—an elegant and a sound one; but he felt that the highest triumph of human learning and wisdom, is, when they are subservient to the establishment of those everlasting truths, by which man lives forever. In simplicity of heart, in unity of purpose, in the abandonment of every selfish consideration, in the unclouded and playful cheerfulness of a pure and benevolent mind, in the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, in the beauty and happiness of genuine holiness, he truly adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things; and being tried by long suffering, he found that that in which he trusted was sufficient for him, in all circumstances, and unto the end. Those who did not know him, may believe this tribute to be the offspring of partial friendship and affection; but the many who did, will feel how inefficient must be the attempt rightly to commemorate his admirable and truly Christian excellences."

The *Manchester Courier*, in an obituary of the same date, said:

"———— In zeal, in tenderness, in piety, in wisdom, in activity, in usefulness;— as a friend, a

counsellor, a pastor, a spiritual father, and an exemplary pattern of all holy life, his superior was not to be found; it would be difficult to name his equal.

"He was a scholar, a philosopher, a finished gentleman, a luminous writer, an impressive preacher, a practical Christian divine.

"In him the elements of an originally happy nature were sweetly blended; tempered and richly adorned by an abundant portion of the spirit of divine grace; holiness had attained great heights — first principles had gone on unto perfection.

"———— In recording the excellence of this venerable man and truly apostolic minister, it may be allowed to mark, as prominent features of a character in which all was lovely, his child-like simplicity, his singleness of heart, the elevation of his devotion, the cheerfulness of his piety, the beauty of his holiness, the charity of his zeal, his bright imagination, his lively fancy, the ease of his seriousness, the innocence of his mirth, the purity of his exuberant joy.

"He was admirable in all the faculties and powers of an enlightened mind; but the charm by which he won and ruled the hearts of all, was that grace in man which is the nearest image on earth of a holy and merciful God,—the boundless benevolence of a truly Catholic spirit.

"Of Mr. Clowes it may justly be said, 'his wisdom was a loving spirit;' of his 'virtue, the memorial is immortal, because it is known with God and with men: when it was present men took example of it; and when it was gone they desired it: it weareth a crown, and triumpheth forever, having gotten the victory, striving for undefiled rewards.'

"This admirable person enjoyed, in a singular degree, through life, the respect and affection of all

by whom he was known; but, in an especial manner, the veneration of his own flock, over which (and it was his first and only cure of souls) he was, by God's providence, the shepherd for the very unusual term of nearly sixty-two years."

Now it ought, surely, to be a matter of some interest to New Church believers of the present day, to know what view was taken by this excellent man, of certain questions upon which there has been, and is still, a difference of opinion among believers. We ought to be interested to know how this man—so meek and charitable, so devout and humble, so pure and good, so richly imbued with the Master's spirit, so well qualified in mind and heart to comprehend the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven—understood and interpreted Swedenborg on certain mooted points. For if John Clowes—a man who, the Rev. Mr. Noble "*firmly believes*, was called [to the high use he performed in the New Church] by a divine interference not less decidedly marked" than that which he recognized in Swedenborg's own case—if such a man, I say, failed rightly to understand the great Seer, who of us may hope to succeed? If he—so richly endowed by nature and by grace, so *nearly related* to Swedenborg, spiritually—did not understand the author whose writings he studied, translated, and did more than any other man toward circulating, who of us may presume to interpret him? How, then, did Mr. Clowes understand the New Jerusalem

Church, whereof he acknowledged Swedenborg to be the divinely appointed herald? Where and what did *he* consider this Church to be? And in what way did he labor for its establishment and upbuilding? Did he deem a new church-organization, with new ordinances, a new priesthood and a new ritual, indispensable? Did he think, as do most of our American New Church divines, that only those belong to this Church, who have read and accepted the writings of Swedenborg? That only such could properly be considered as Christians, or as belonging to the Christian Church? And did he busy himself in organizing a new visible body, framing new rules of order, and fixing up and setting in operation the complicated machinery of a new Sect?

Far different from this was Mr. Clowes' idea of that New Church which Swedenborg heralded. He believed it to be, as he says, "*a new state of life amongst men*"—a new Dispensation of universal grace and truth. In one of his excellent works, he says:

"I apprehend that by the term *New Church*, is not meant a mere new Sect, or particular denomination of Christians, as Quakers, Moravians, Methodists, and the like; but that it denotes a Dispensation of universal grace, mercy, and truth, to the whole human race, without exception or limitation of time, place, or sect." (*Dialogues between Sophron and Philadelphus.*)

Again in the same treatise, he says:

"Nothing, therefore, can be plainer, than that the New Jerusalem Dispensation is to be universal, and to extend unto all people, nations, and languages, on the face of the earth, to be a blessing unto such as are meet to receive a blessing. Sects and Sectarians, as such, can find no place in this General Assembly of the ransomed of the Lord. All the little distinctions of modes, forms, and particular expressions of devotion and worship, will be swallowed up and lost in the unlimited effusions of heavenly love, charity, and benevolence, with which the hearts of every member of this glorious New Church and Body of Jesus Christ will overflow one toward another. Men will no longer judge one another as to the mere externals of church communion, be they perfect or be they imperfect; for they will be taught that, whosoever acknowledges the Incarnate Jehovah in heart and life, departing from all evil, and doing what is right and good according to the commandments, he is a member of the New Jerusalem, a living stone in the Lord's new Temple, and a part of that great family in heaven and earth, whose common Father and Head is Jesus Christ. Every one, therefore, will call his neighbor *Brother*, in whom he observes this spirit of pure charity; and he will ask no questions concerning the form of words which compose his creed, but will be satisfied with observing in him the purity and power of a heavenly life."

Mr. Clowes spent his life in teaching the precious verities of the New Church; and no one has ever taught them so persuasively, or with such eminent

success. But so far was he from desiring to establish a new external organization, or to build up a new sect—so far from believing that *any new visible body* was, or *could be made*, identical with the Apocalyptic New Jerusalem, he steadfastly set his face against every such Babylonish idea and purpose. He not only remained in the same church where the Heavenly Doctrines first found him, for more than fifty years after his acceptance of them—meanwhile approving himself all the more devoted, efficient and useful as a minister of Christ, on account of the new light he had received—but he earnestly advised all other New Church believers to do the same. He did not believe in the expediency or propriety of an abrupt separation from the communion of other Christians. He regarded such separation as unauthorized and unnecessary—as fraught with danger and mischief—as originating in a sectarian spirit, and tending to encourage and foster the evil of Sectarianism. He therefore spoke against it, wrote against it, and acted against it, till the day of his death; nor do I believe that he is any the less opposed to it now—albeit for so many years breathing the sweet air and enjoying the serene light of the celestial realms. In 1792 he published an able address on this subject, of some thirty pages in length, under the following title: "An Address from the translator to the readers of the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, intended to point out the general design and tendency

of those writings, and particularly to show that *they do not authorize* the readers in a separation, at this time, from external communion with other professing Christians." And after remarking upon some of the dangers to be apprehended from such separation, he adds—and in view of what has since transpired, his words sound like the words of a gifted prophet:

"Would the compass of this address permit, I could here point out some other dangers to be apprehended by the New Church from a sudden separation from external communion with other professing Christians, *such as particularly the danger of falling into a sectarian spirit, and thereby despising or thinking lightly of all others, who are not worshipping God according to certain forms expressed in a peculiar language:* but I trust that what hath been already said, will be sufficient to convince every candid reader of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, that such separation is neither prudent nor expedient at this time, whilst the New Church is in its present infant state, nor yet agreeable to the sentiments of our enlightened author."

In this Address, also, Mr. Clowes gives us his idea of the New Church, which accords with his uniform statement of his view on this subject. He says:

"It is a church not to be limited by any external forms or ceremonies of worship, neither to be pointed out by a lo here, or a lo there, but universal as the reception of heavenly truth and obedience to its dictates, consisting of the upright and sincere in

heart amongst all people, nations, and languages, and forming one grand body or kingdom here on earth, whereof the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the soul or head, and of which all are living members, who worship Him in spirit and in truth. Woe be to those, who would endeavor to confine this blessed tabernacle and temple of the most High and Holy One, within any pale of their own framing, under the delusive imagination that any mere opinion, speculation, doctrine, form or ceremony whatsoever, can of themselves constitute that spiritual building, in which the almighty and eternal JEHOVAH JESUS dwells, with all the blessings of his parental love, and the powers of his salvation! Whereas it must be very plain to every attentive reader, both of the Sacred Scriptures and of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, that the church of Christ consists solely of the humble, the upright and the obedient, agreeable to those words of the Lord, 'My mother and my brethren are these, which hear the Word of God, and do it.' (Luke viii. 21); and in another place, 'My sheep hear my voice' (John x. 27); where to hear is to obey."

Such was the Rev. John Clowes' idea of the New Jerusalem Church. So just and sensible was he in his interpretation of Swedenborg, so truly catholic in all his views and feelings. And has there ever lived a man more imbued with the *spirit* of the New Church than he, or better qualified to give a sound and true interpretation of the writings of that illumined author?

Turn, now, to that other individual mentioned at the beginning of this chapter — Robert Hindmarsh. He was the son of James Hindmarsh, a preacher among the Wesleyan Methodists. And while no religious sect has exhibited greater zeal and devotion than the Methodists, and few perhaps done more than they in the work of awakening sinners to a just sense of their lost condition, yet it cannot be denied that the ministers of this sect have, from the commencement, betrayed an unusual love of priestly power and pre-eminence, and an extraordinary passion for, as well as skill in, Sect-building. These characteristics were remarkably conspicuous in the founder of this sect—Rev. John Wesley. This fact is worth remembering, as it may help to account for the early manifestation of the sect-spirit in Robert Hindmarsh, whose predominant purpose and whole course, after receiving the doctrines of the New Church, were so different from those of Mr. Clowes. The following is young Hindmarsh's own account of his conversion to the faith of the New Church. The reader will not fail to notice the strong contrast between the manner of it and that of the sainted Clowes, as well as between the spirit and subsequent aims of the two men.

"On the first of January, 1782, I paid a visit to my father, James Hindmarsh, who then resided at Canterbury, being a preacher in the connexion of Wesleyan Methodists. [Young Hindmarsh was at

this time in his 23d year.] Our conversation turning on the subject of Swedenborg's writings, he informed me that Mr. George Keen, a Quaker gentleman of that city, was in possession of some of them, and probably would favor me with a perusal of them, if requested to do so. The next day, January 2d, I waited upon Mr. Keen, who kindly lent me, though a stranger to him, the treatise on *Influx*, and the treatise on *Heaven and Hell*. These works I read with avidity, and instantly perceived their origin. I therefore as naturally embraced and delighted in them, as the eye embraces and delights in objects that reflect the golden rays of the rising sun. [Does this indicate an excess of humility, or an excess of something quite the opposite?] The same day that introduced me to a knowledge of these writings, introduced me also to the first interview with the young lady, who, on the 7th of May following, became my wife, and with whom I had the happiness of living in much harmony and affection nearly fifty-one years, that is, until the time of her decease, which took place on the 2d of March, 1833. Thus I found myself doubly blessed by the events of the before-mentioned day.

"From that time I began to search out other readers of the same writings in London, *in order to form a society* for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of the great truths contained in them." — *Rise and Progress of the New Church*, p. 10.

I submit that this account, given by Mr. Hindmarsh himself, breathes the spirit of the merely natural man, rather than that of the devout and humble Christian. Then observe how quickly the Wesleyan

proclivity toward sect-building begins to manifest itself. *Immediately* he "began to search out other readers of the same writings in London, in order to form a society," &c. And he continued his search for a whole year, during which time he found only three or four more Swedenborgians in all London—enough, however, for one to begin with, who was particularly anxious to start a new Sect. Here is his own account of the first meetings of this congregation of three individuals:

"In one whole year after my reception of the writings, I found only three or four individuals in London, with whom I could maintain a friendly intercourse on the subjects contained in them. In 1783, I invited these few to hold regular meetings for reading and conversation in my house in Clerkenwell Close; not far from the spot where Swedenborg died. These meetings were continued every Sunday morning, till it was thought expedient to endeavor to make them more public. I was possessed of all the writings in Latin, and these were constantly on the table before us, while we read in them those illustrations of the Holy Word, and those extraordinary Revelations in reference to the state of things in another life, which so peculiarly distinguish our Author's theological works from those of every other man. In this manner we went on for some time, our first meeting *consisting only of three persons*, viz., Mr. Peter Provo, of the Minories, apothecary; Mr. William Bonington, of Red Lion Street, clockcase-maker; and myself, of Clerkenwell Close, printer. Afterward, John Augustus Tulk, Esq., of Kenning-

ton Lane, Vauxhall, a gentleman of independent property, joined our little society, and by his zeal, ability, and judgment, added strength to our hands. It was now agreed to call a public meeting of all the friends and readers of the writings in London, of whom we had any certain information; first, that we might become better acquainted with each other; and secondly to unite our forces, and make known to the world what we could no longer in conscience conceal from their notice. Our first public meeting was accordingly fixed to be held at the London Coffee-House, on Ludgate Hill, where we met, five in number, at five o'clock on Thursday evening, the 5th of December, 1783. But finding, when we were assembled, that no private room could be allotted to our party, and that it would be inconvenient to transact our business in any of the open boxes of the coffee-room, we immediately adjourned to the Queen's Arms Tavern, now St. Paul's Hotel, on the south side of St. Paul's Church-Yard, where we had a room to ourselves, and drank tea together. The following persons were present on this occasion, viz., Mr. John Augustus Tulk, Mr. Peter Provo, Mr. William Bonington, Mr. William Spence, of 17 Great Marylebone Street, surgeon, and myself. Another gentleman, Mr. Henry Peckitt, of 50 Old Compton Street, Soho, a retired apothecary, went to the London Coffee-House, after we had left it, in hopes of joining our company; but hearing no tidings of us there, although we had left word at the bar where we were gone, returned home without seeing us."—*Rise and Progress of the New Church, by R. Hindmarsh*, pages 10–14.

From this time meetings continued to be held in London "for the purpose of reading together, and publishing the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg." But meetings for *such* purposes alone, could not long satisfy the aspirations of Babel-builders. Accordingly in 1787, to quote Mr. Hindmarsh's own language, "A *Select* Meeting was likewise formed, consisting of those persons *most anxious to bring forward the New Church in its ultimate and external form*, and who could conveniently attend its primitive institution." And Mr. Hindmarsh, of course, was one of this "Select Meeting," and was one of the "*most* anxious" to start a new Sect, or to see the New Church "in its ultimate and external form." A preparatory meeting of these "Select" persons, consisting of thirteen individuals, was held July 29, 1787, "on the Sunday preceding the day which was fixed upon for the formal and solemn commencement of the New Church in its external form." And among the declarations "unanimously approved of" by this Select Meeting, are the following:

"1. The Truths of the New Church are *alone* contained in the Word, and the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

"2. The Doctrine of Correspondence, being the Knowledge of the Order of Influx, as proceeding from the Divine Humanity, is essential to the Understanding of the Word.

"3. The earnest and hearty Rejection of the Doctrines and Forms of the Old Church, must precede

the full Reception of the Influx of Wisdom and Love from the Divine Humanity, through the New Heavens, into the New Church.

"4. The full Reception of the glorious Truths of the New Church, as revealed by Swedenborg, is essential to constitute a Member of the New Church on earth, and thereby to admit him into an immediate Conjunction with the Lord, and consociation with the Angels of the New Heavens.

"5. Introduction into the New Church is solely through the Spiritual Correspondent BAPTISM, *performed in that Church.*

"6. Conjunction with the Lord, and Consociation with the Angels of the New Heavens, are effected by the HOLY SUPPER, *taken in the New Church*, according to its Heavenly and Divine Correspondences."

Here was the inception of that exclusiveness and sectarianism which have since done so much mischief, and brought such unmerited dishonor upon the name of Swedenborg, as well as the Church whereof he was the divinely appointed herald. Here is the fountain head, to which may be traced the strange delusion, under which so many, otherwise sensible people, have since fallen, that, outside of our little Swedenborgian communion, there are no true Christians—none who understand the Word of the Lord—none who have attained to a vital union with Christ—none who are consociated with the angels of the New Heaven—none who can properly be considered members of the true church on earth. According to the declarations above recited, a "*full reception*" of the truths reveal-

ed by Swedenborg "is essential to constitute a member of the New Church on earth." It is further affirmed in the same declaration, that only those who are in such "full reception" of the truths revealed through Swedenborg, can be "admitted into an immediate conjunction with the Lord, and consociation with the angels of the New Heavens." It is also declared that "introduction into the New Church is *solely* through the spiritual correspondent Baptism, *performed in that Church*"—that is, by the hands of a professed New Church minister; and "conjunction with the Lord, and consociation with the angels of the New Heavens, are effected by the Holy Supper *taken in the New Church*." Of course, the meaning of the individuals who made this declaration was, that there can be no such conjunction with the Lord or consociation with the angels, except when the Holy Supper is administered *by a Swedenborgian minister*. And the same sectarian and exclusive notions have since been adopted by a large majority of nominal New-Churchmen; and some of our American New Church ministers, as has been shown in the early part of this volume (page 17), have gone considerably beyond this in the same wrong and Babylonish direction.

The framing and adopting of the above declarations were a part of the "solemn preparation"—to quote again Robert Hindmarsh's own words—"for what they conceived to be an event of great import-

ance and interest to all who should thereafter be admitted as actual and visible members of the Lord's New Church on earth." And these thirteen individuals then proceeded to appoint a day for carrying their intentions into effect. And, agreeable to appointment, on Tuesday Evening, July 31st, 1787, "A meeting [consisting of sixteen persons] was held, for the purpose of forming, by the Divine Mercy of the Lord, the New Church upon earth signified in the Revelation by the New Jerusalem descending from [God out of] heaven." Such was the declared *purpose* of this meeting, according to the Society's Book of Minutes. And the same authority tells us, that, after the meeting had been opened with the Lord's prayer, "it was determined by Lot, that Mr. JAMES HINDMARSH should officiate in the room of a Priest in blessing the bread and wine for the Holy Supper according to the form prescribed at the last meeting; which Sacrament was to be considered *as the sign and seal of the formation of the New Church.*" Only eleven of those present partook of the Holy Supper, not one of whom, nor even the administrator himself, had received what is called New Church baptism. After the administration of the Supper, the five non-communicants present on that occasion, of whom Robert Hindmarsh was the first in order, came forward, and, at their own request, were "baptized into the faith of the New Church."

"Such," says Mr. Hindmarsh, "was the commencement of the New Church in its external and visible Form, in the city of London. . . . Due regard was paid to the solemnity of the occasion, and to the high character given in the Book of Revelation to the New Jerusalem dispensation. . . . We therefore did what we conceived to be a duty imposed upon us, as the first Society in the known world, that was disposed to bring into ultimate effect the true worship of the Lord."—*Rise and Progress of the New Jerusalem Church*, pp. 56–59.

Look, now, at the strange inconsistency in the above proceedings. Thirteen individuals agree unanimously, on the 29th of July, that "*introduction* into the New Church is *solely* through Baptism *performed in that Church*." And two days after that, these same persons meet together, and a majority of them, in the face of their own previous declaration, partake of the Holy Supper together, "as the sign and seal of the formation of the New Church"—not one of them, nor even the officiating clergyman himself, having received the kind of baptism which they *all* had agreed was the only gate of entrance into the New Church! They partake of the Holy Supper *in* the New Church, and "as the sign and seal of its formation," when, according to their own recorded decision, not an individual of them was *in* this Church at the time, having never passed through the introductory gate! Yet Mr. Robert Hindmarsh calls this Meeting, arranged with so much "solemn prepara-

tion," "the commencement of the New Church in its external and visible Form"! He was himself baptized by his father, and so introduced into the New Church, at a time when, according to his own expressed conviction, his father was not *in* the New Church, and of course could not with propriety officiate in introducing others.

And, steadfast in his purpose of building up a new Sect, and unwavering in his belief that this Sect would be the veritable New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse if it were only so *named* or agreed upon by himself and others, Mr. Hindmarsh, on the 5th of May, 1788, proposed that "this Society, heretofore known by the name of 'The Society for promoting the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church,' be in future denominated, 'The New Church, *signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation.*'" And on Sunday, May 18th, the Record says: "At a full meeting of the Society, the question for altering the name of the Society was put and unanimously approved of; in consequence of which the name is to be in future '*The New Church, signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation.*'"

Such and so manifest was the sect-spirit in Robert Hindmarsh. Such and so astounding his presumption. To think of his gravely proposing, and so quickly securing the unanimous approval of his proposition, that the little Society which he was the chief instrument in forming, should be henceforth

called, "The New Church, signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation"! And more amazing still, that so many of the readers of Swedenborg since his time—many of them sensible enough on other subjects—should have fallen under the very same delusion, should have adopted the same narrow and sectarian view of the church of the New Jerusalem, and persuaded themselves that they are the only people on the face of the earth, who properly deserve to be called Christians! So much easier is it to propagate notions which chime in with the pride and conceit of the natural heart, than those broad, elevated, and catholic views, which come from the Lord out of heaven.

And it was not long before the real *animus* of this visible New Church—this New Jerusalem manufactured by Mr. Hindmarsh—began to manifest itself. It was impossible that it should have been otherwise. To quote here a paragraph from the *Remembrancer and Recorder*, the first Part of which was lately published in London:

"The Church which came into nominal existence on the proposition of young Robert Hindmarsh, was not long in giving evidence of the Babylonish nature of its origin, and of the consequent impurities of its nature. Influx is according to form; and so, when the Babylonish spirits in the world of spirits, had found a plane into and through which they could operate, they were soon busily engaged in forming the nucleus of a Babylon, in London, under the denomination of—"New Church." And the energetic

proprium of Robert Hindmarsh seems to have been quite adapted to be their medium.

"According to the 'Minute-Book' before mentioned, he was the Secretary of the Society which met in the Inner Temple. He was the individual who first called together the receivers in London. He in concert with a very few others, first acted in the setting up of a separate society, contrary to the decision of the majority; according to his own testimony. Only 13 individuals, himself included, signed the 'Minute-Book' at the first Meeting, as members. He was the Secretary for more than two years. During which time, the rules were drawn up: The forms of Baptism, and of the Lord's Supper: The forms for 'Ordination of Ministers:' also, The propositions for the first Conference: The letter to the non-separated Friends at Manchester: The whole of the proceedings of the first Conference: all of which are regularly entered in the 'Minute-Book,' in his handwriting; except the letter to the Manchester Friends. Up to May 4th, 1789, the whole Book, from the first day, seems to be in his handwriting. And from that date, to April 11th, 1790, the account of the proceedings seems to have been torn out. From page 46, to 63, is missing. And we have been informed that it was not deemed advisable to let posterity see the nature of the records contained therein."

But in an "Address by Manoah Sibley," we find the nature of those transactions referred to in the manner following:

"I am here under the necessity of stating, however reluctantly, that in the next year, 1789, a very

sorrowful occurrence befel the infant New Church, whereby the floodgates of immorality were in danger of being thrown open to her inevitable destruction. The Church held many solemn meetings on the occasion, which ended in withdrawing herself from six of her members, viz: Robert Hindmarsh, Henry Servanté, Charles Berns Wadstrom, Angustus Nordenskjold, George Robinson, and Alexander Wilderspin. On the Church coming to this conclusion, Mr. Robert Hindmarsh remarked, That he would never put it into the power of any Society again to cut him off, as he never more would be a member of one. And I believe, notwithstanding his eminent services in the cause of the New Church, that, to his dying day he kept his word."—"This grievous circumstance I kept locked up in my own bosom for many years; and I would not now have mentioned it, had not Mr. Noble's statements called it forth."

And so it came to pass, that, from the New Church which Robert Hindmarsh was so active and influential in "forming" in 1787, which, in 1788 he caused to be designated "The New Church signified by the New Jerusalem in the Revelation," and which he believed and declared that no one could enter except by "being baptized into the faith of the New Church," and of course by the hands of a professed New Church minister—from this very Church, Mr. Hindmarsh, its projector and master-builder, was himself excommunicated in 1789; and, according to Mr. Sibley, he never again entered it, but actually died without the pale of what he regarded as the Apocalyptic New Jerusalem.

Such was the ambition of Robert Hindmarsh whom we may consider the chief architect and founder and fit representative of our present nominal New Church. Such was his conception of the New Jerusalem; such his views of the methods by which it was to be established and built up here on the earth; and such his brief sojourn within her walls—walls which his own hands has builded.

The reader will not fail to notice the contrast between the character of this man and that of the sainted Clowes. And the contrast between their views of the nature and whereabout of the New Church, as well as in their methods for establishing and building it up, is not less striking. Let him judge which of these two men was nearest allied spiritually to the Heaven-illumined Swedenborg; which, by his peculiar gifts and graces, could enter into fullest sympathy with him; and which, therefore, was best able to understand and interpret him aright. And let him determine, finally, whose views, purposes, and methods, are most in accordance with the catholicity of the real New Church, as unfolded in PART I of this volume; and whose, harmonize best with the uncatholicity of the nominal New Church, as exhibited in PART II. And may the Lord Jesus Christ enlighten his understanding and guide him to a right decision.

CHAPTER V.

THE LATEST ILLUSTRATION.

THE *New Jerusalem Messenger*, published in the city of New York, has, for nearly ten years, been the weekly organ of the nominal New Church in this country. And no one will deny that this paper reflects the general character, spirit, policy, and purposes of this Church with remarkable fidelity. It was established, and has since been maintained, for this very purpose. If it failed to represent the views and wishes of the body whose organ it is, it would not be sustained. It is the acknowledged mouthpiece of the organized New Church in America, and the *animus* of this Church may therefore be considered as truthfully revealed in its sayings and doings. I have already had occasion to refer to the narrow and illiberal spirit of this paper, and have given one example (see pages 250–'63), among the scores that might be adduced, in illustration of its uncatholicity. Let me now adduce another instance of more recent occurrence, showing that, in regard to catholicity as well as some other Christian qualities, the *Messenger*

has undergone no essential change since the installation of its new editor.

A few weeks ago, my attention was called to a communication in the *Messenger*, in which a work by the Rev. John Clowes, was referred to in terms of commendation. Presuming that few of the readers of the *Messenger* have access to this work, and that probably none of them—not even the gentleman who commended it to the favorable attention of Bishop McCrosky—were aware of the truly catholic views which it contained, I immediately prepared and sent for publication in the columns of that paper, the following communication—not expecting, however, from my knowledge of the character and established policy of that sheet, that it would be published:

For the N. J. Messenger.

MR. EDITOR.—Rev. Mr. Silver, in his communication published in the *Messenger* last week, mentions "a Dialogue by Mr. Clowes, on the views of the New Church," among the works sent by him to Bishop McCrosky a few years ago, in which the Bishop would find an explanation and defense of our views by a good and able minister of his own church. This "Dialogue" to which Mr. Silver refers, is, like every thing else from the pen of its pious and excellent author, a work of peculiar interest and value. It was one of the first—I think the *very* first New Church work that I read with interest. And as very few of

the readers of your paper have, probably, read or seen the work, and as some portions of it have a direct and immediate bearing upon the question you have undertaken to discuss in the *Messenger*, "How broad is the New Church?" I have thought that the views of this esteemed writer upon a mooted question might be acceptable at this time, and therefore take the liberty of sending you one or two extracts from the above-mentioned "Dialogue." The following is in point as touching upon the question referred to:

[Then follow the extracts from Clowes, which may be seen quoted in the last chapter on pages 280, '81, and '84, and which it is therefore unnecessary to repeat here—together with one other short extract of similar purport. After which was added only the following:]

Now I know not whether the Rev. Mr. Silver accepts the views expressed in the foregoing extracts; but it is fair to presume that he does, else he would hardly have sent the "Dialogue" here quoted to Bishop McCrosky, at the same time commending it to him as an able explanation and defense of the doctrines which he (Mr. S.) had embraced, by a clergyman of the Bishop's own church. However this may be, I think all will admit that John Clowes was one of the most learned, humble, pious, sincere, charitable and earnest New-Churchmen that ever

lived. No one was ever better qualified both in mind and heart than he, to understand and rightly interpret the teachings of Swedenborg; for no one, I think, ever possessed in larger measure than he, the meek, pure, and gentle spirit of our Divine Master. No one ever labored so long and so earnestly as he—through the pulpit, the press, private correspondence, and social intercourse—to disseminate a knowledge of the heavenly doctrines; nor, I may add, has any one ever labored in the same sacred cause so successfully. And as to the manner in which he was first led to the writings of Swedenborg, I think there was something more nearly miraculous—something in which the hand of the Lord was more clearly conspicuous—than in the case of any other individual that has ever lived. These facts, while they ought not to lead us to accept his teachings without questioning, should, I submit, entitle them to the most thoughtful and serious consideration. Certainly they should shield New-Churchmen of our own day, who entertain views similar to those of Mr. Clowes, against the charge or suspicion of heresy, as well as against harsh and unbrotherly treatment.

B. F. B.

ORANGE, *July* 13, 1863.

The above communication was refused admission into the columns of the *Messenger*, and was promptly returned to me, accompanied with a note from the

editor, in which, however, no satisfactory reason for its refusal was assigned. Resolved on leaving untried no reasonable effort to secure the publication of these extracts in the Convention's organ, at the same time not anticipating any better success than I had achieved in similar enterprises on several previous occasions, I immediately penned and sent to the editor the following remonstrance against what seemed to me his unreasonable and unjust course:

ORANGE, *July* 21, 1863.

Rev. J. P. Stuart—DEAR SIR: I am in the receipt of yours of the 16th inst., in which you decline publishing the communication I sent you last week. But I cannot suffer your decision to pass without entering my protest, and offering a few words of earnest remonstrance. I think the publication, in the columns of the *Messenger*, of the extracts from Mr. Clowes which I sent you, is required by every principle of justice, as well as the laws of Christian charity. I, therefore, feel that I have a right to *demand* their publication, and *do* demand it as my right, and not merely as a personal favor.

You say, in your note of the 16th inst.: "I do not think it would be useful to the readers of the *Messenger* to controvert the conduct of the late Rev. John Clowes." What an extraordinary reason for declining my communication! The *conduct* of Mr. Clowes is not in question, and cannot, therefore, be brought

into controversy by my communication, unless you choose to drag it in without reason or provocation. It is Mr. Clowes' *views* of the breadth and catholicity of the New Church, or his clearly expressed opinion upon this mooted question, "Who, according to the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg, properly constitute the New Church?"—that the extracts I sent you clearly present. That the views of this good man do not accord with those of our nominal New Church, but are identical with those entertained by myself and others, is plain from the extracts I sent you. But you are under no obligation to *controvert* these views. They are not presented in a form to provoke controversy—that terrible spectre which New Church editors affect to be so dreadfully frightened at, and which for years has furnished them with a most convenient and stereotyped excuse for shutting out from their columns everything calculated to expose their own errors mistakes, unfairness, or disloyalty to the truth. *I* do not propose to *controvert* Mr. Clowes' views, nor do I ask you to do it. I simply ask you to *publish* certain extracts from this writer, which I sent you, and which you well know are not of a controversial character. If *you* choose to controvert the views, or to allow any one else to do it, that is entirely your own concern. You have an undoubted right to do so. But it is not asked or desired by me.

And let me tell you why I demand, *as my right*, that these extracts be published in the *Messenger*. Mr.

Clowes is universally admitted to have been, not only a good and useful New-Churchman, but a most learned, humble, pious, and devoted man, and one of the most faithful students of Swedenborg, too, that ever lived. He is not known or spoken of among New-Churchmen as a man who cherished "mischievous," or "dangerous," or "heterodox" notions. He is commonly considered a sound and able expositor of the writings of Swedenborg, which he studied probably with more diligence and devout prayerfulness than any other person ever did. His works are read and commended by New-Churchmen as second only to the works of Swedenborg. They are even advertised in the columns of the *Messenger* as New Church works. And one of the ministers of the General Convention sends to a Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the very work from which I have copied extracts for your paper, commending it as an able exposition of New Church views. And the Rev. Mr. Noble has recorded his firm belief, "that the late excellent Mr. Clowes was called by a divine interference not less decidedly marked [than in Swedenborg's own case] to be the principal instrument for making the truths discovered in the writings of Swedenborg, known" throughout the kingdom of Great Britain.

Now, for entertaining and openly avowing the same opinions in regard to the nature and whereabout of the Lord's New Church, and other questions of a

kindred character, which the pious and excellent Clowes entertained to the close of his life, and which are to be found in his published writings, see in what a harsh and unbrotherly way I am treated. I am looked upon and spoken of by the readers of your paper as a man unsound in the New Church faith—as a despised and condemned heretic. I am shut out of New Church pulpits, as if unfit to teach the doctrines of this Church. My books have all been stricken from the list of New Church works in the advertising columns of the *Messenger*, as if poison lurked beneath their covers. The right to be regarded or treated as a New-Churchman has been denied me. Without a trial for any alleged offense, without the opportunity of even listening to charges if there were any charges against me, without any request from myself, and even without notice given me, my name has been stricken from the roll of recognized New Church ministers. And so I am treated "as a heathen man and a publican" by those who never came to me, individually or collectively, to tell me of any fault, to convince me of any error, or to seek, through kind and Christian persuasion, to win me from any evil ways, real or fancied. Yet the very people by whom I am thus treated—the members of the General Convention—*profess* to take for their fundamental rule of discipline, and have so declared in the preamble to their constitution—the Lord's words in Matthew xviii., "If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him

his fault," &c. Not an individual among all in your Convention, who profess to be governed by this precept, has ever come to me to tell me of any fault whatever. Yet my name has been "cast out as evil." And the very paper which you edit, and which now refuses to insert three short extracts from the published writings of Mr. Clowes, has done its full share in this disgraceful and wicked business of defaming, unchurching and injuring a Christian brother. It has assailed me without cause—has misrepresented, and sometimes caricatured, my views of the New Church, and then has persistently refused to let me speak through its columns in my own behalf, to define my position in gentlest phrase, or explain my views in the briefest manner. Some two years ago, a violent and uncivil attack was made by the Rev. Mr. Mason, of London, through the columns of the *Intellectual Repository*, upon my volume of Letters to Henry Ward Beecher concerning the Divine Trinity. My view of this subject was characterized by my assailant as "arbitrary," "unscriptural," "deistical," "Pagan," "altogether inaccurate," "a man-made doctrine," &c. The substance of Mr. Mason's article was immediately copied into the columns of the *Messenger*. And when I asked the privilege of showing, through the columns of that paper, that the view of the Trinity presented in my "Letters" was precisely that of Swedenborg, as he had been understood and inter-

preted by Noble and Clowes and all the most intelligent New-Churchmen in this country and in England, that privilege was denied me. Subsequently I sent a reply to the *Intellectual*, every word of which was promptly published in that journal, and whose publication, Mr. Smithson (its then editor) said in a foot-note, "fair play and justice required." And in the same foot-note the editor clearly condemns Mr. Mason's critique as unauthorized and unjust, and one which would not have been published had he given it due consideration, and adds: "But as it is, our readers, we think, will have their minds more enlightened on this subject by the luminous statements which Mr. Barrett has adduced from Swedenborg." Yet luminous and conclusive as these statements were, and triumphant as my reply was considered by the readers as well as the editor of the *Intellectual*, the *Messenger*, which made such haste to copy the substance of the *attack*, has never to this day copied one line of my yet unanswered *reply*—no, nor (to my knowledge) even informed its readers that any reply was ever made by me. And this, too, notwithstanding an officer of the General Convention, and one who has been long and intimately connected with the *Messenger*, was reminded more than a year ago of the course which the plainest principles of justice dictated in the premises. What a course for a professedly *Christian* journal—a *New Church* journal—to pur-

sue! The *New York Herald* or *Evening Express* seldom behaves in a more unchristian way.

I mention these things, that you may see how great wrongs the *Messenger*, in the hands of your predecessor, has done me, and that you may do what you can to repair them. They constitute additional reasons, I think, why the communication I sent you last week should be published.

The whole matter, then, presents itself to my mind thus:

The *Messenger* has done its full share—and a pretty large share, too—in the bad work of heaping odium upon me—arraying prejudice against me on account of my liberal views, and impressing the New Church public with the belief that I entertain opinions which are false, heretical, and mischievous. Now, *upon all points* wherein I have differed in opinion from my brethren, and for which difference I have been dealt with so harshly, I find (though I was not aware of it until quite recently) that my views are identically the same as those of Rev. John Clowes on the same subjects. Is it not right, then, that this fact should be communicated to your readers, and that I should have the benefit of it? Clowes has been considered a wise and holy man—a good New-Churchman. Why, then, should I, for entertaining and expressing the same views that he did, be persecuted, and hated, and my name be cast out as evil? Why should my books be stricken from the list of acknowledged New

Church works, because of my alleged heresies, while the works of John Clowes, whose heresies were *on all points identical with my own*, continue to be advertised in your columns? If your readers knew that John Clowes held the same catholic sentiments that I hold —that he understood and interpreted Swedenborg precisely as I do upon all points that have been brought into controversy, would they not insist that the same sentence of condemnation and virtual excommunication which has been pronounced upon me and my writings, ought, in justice, to be pronounced also upon him and his? Why should not the same offense (supposing our beliefs *to be* an offense) be visited with like punishment in the one case as in the other?

I insist, therefore, that it is no more than right your readers should be informed what were Mr. Clowes' views on those points, whereon my opinions have been pronounced false and mischievous. And what fairer way of presenting his views, than by quoting his own words, as I did in my communication of last week? Clowes has borne unequivocal testimony upon the main points in controversy between me and my brethren. But I do not ask you or your readers to accept his testimony as conclusive. I simply ask that you do not, as the lawyers say, *rule it out*—that you do not refuse to let this witness testify—that you do not shut him out of court—that you allow me the benefit of his testimony (be that greater or less), before the tribunal where I have been so

often, and, as I think, so unjustly arraigned. This is the demand of simple justice—nothing more. Will you grant it?

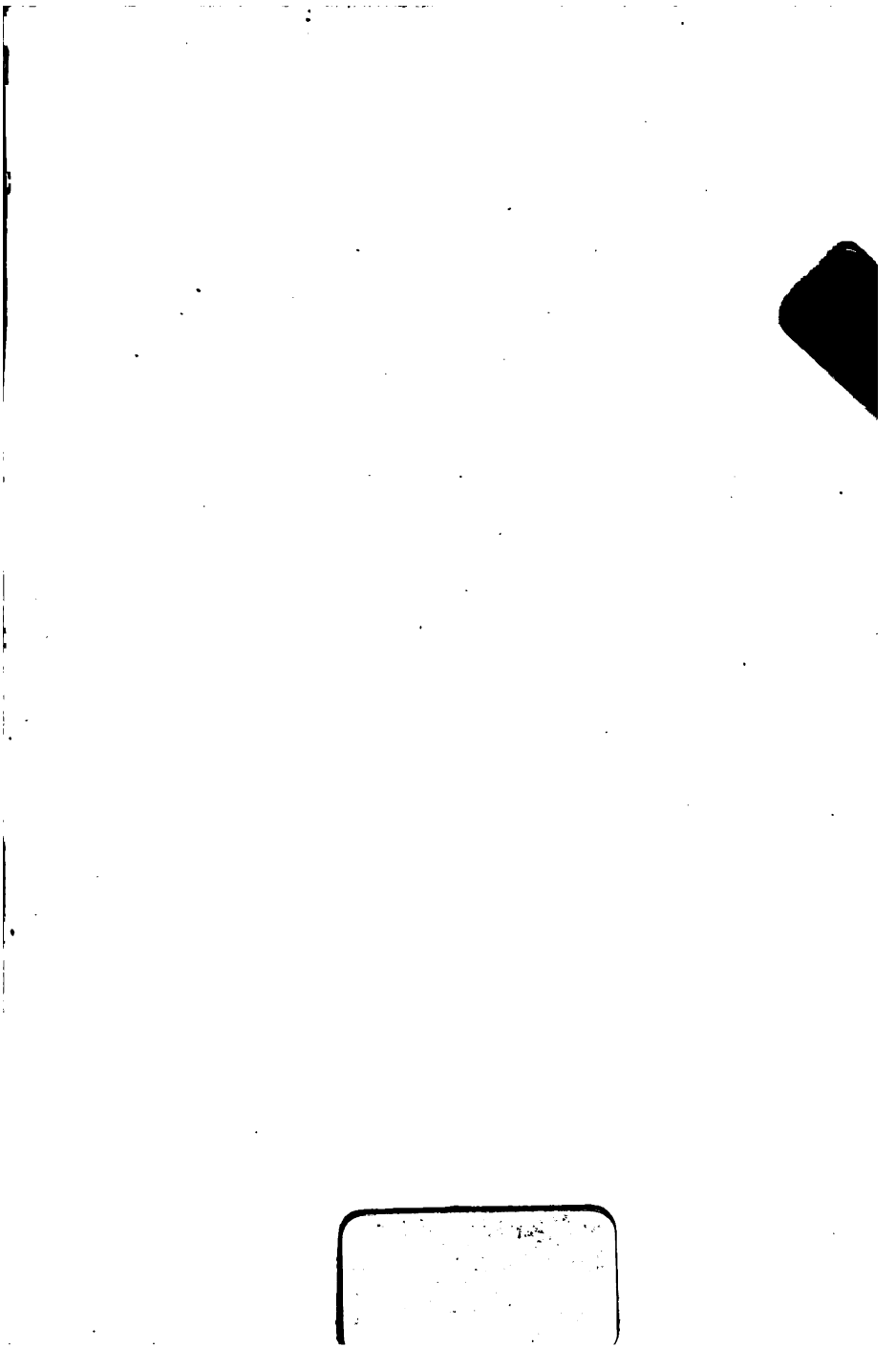
I certainly think "it *would* be useful to the readers of the *Messenger*"—eminently so—to let them see, from the quotations I sent you, what the venerable and pious Clowes believed, in regard to the nature and whereabout of the New Church. It would be likely to modify in some measure their opinions concerning, and their feelings toward, certain individuals whom they have been taught to look upon, if not to hate, as heretics. Perchance they might be brought to reflect, that, if so wise and good a man, and such a devoted student of Swedenborg, as John Clowes, believed thus and so, may there not, after all, be more truth than falsehood in the belief? And may we not be wronging ourselves, as well as doing injustice to some of our neighbors, in agreeing to regard as false and heretical certain views which we have not yet examined with sufficient care? I think if such a train of reflection could be induced in your readers, it would be eminently useful to them all—and by no means detrimental to the interests of truth.

You thank me, in your note, for my "kind regard for the *Messenger*," as evinced in sending the communication which you decline to publish. I ought to tell you, I suppose, that your thanks are unmerited, as I did not intend, by preparing and sending you that communication, to express any particular regard for your paper, but simply my desire that your readers might

understand what a heretic the Rev. John Clowes, was according to the tests which our nominal New Church and its organs are disposed to apply. I regret that the course which the *Messenger* has pursued from the outset, has been such as to win from me a feeling far removed from, quite the opposite, indeed, of that which would be understood by "kind regard." I had hoped, when its editorial charge passed from Mr. John L. Jewett's hands into your own, that a somewhat increased breadth and catholicity would be given it—at least that it would betray an appreciation of common justice, which it had previously seemed so sadly to lack. But that hope you will compel me to abandon, if you persist in your refusal to publish the communication I sent you.

Trusting to hear from you again at an early day, and that you will see what justice to me and your readers requires in the premises, and will be led to act accordingly, I remain Yours truly,

B. F. BARRETT.

I have only to add that it is now three weeks since the above remonstrance was sent, and the editor of the *Messenger* has not yet condescended even to favor me with a reply.

Are these things in accordance with the large, tolerant, free and loving spirit of the Gospel? Do they exemplify the beautiful catholicity of the New Church? I think not; but rather the offensive and hurtful *un*-catholicity of New-Churchmen.